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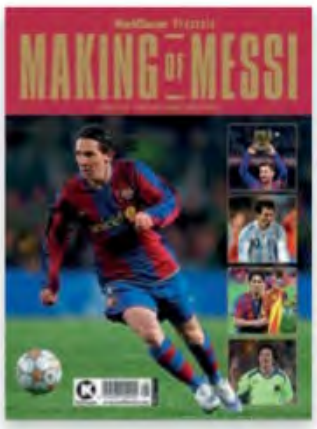

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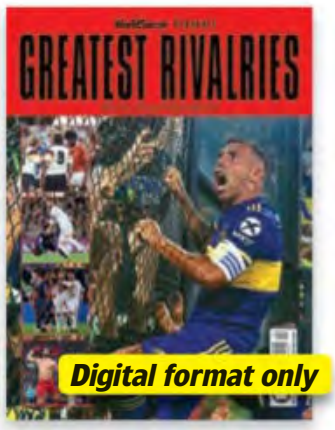

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In Pictures

The global game caught on camera

Spain v England...Dani Carvajal and Dani Olmo celebrate at the final whistle of Euro 2024, while Jude Bellingham looks on

10
10
6

Slovenia v Denmark... Christian Eriksen celebrates scoring in the group stage, almost three years to the day after his cardiac arrest at Euro 2020

Austria v France...cameras capture the moment Kylian Mbappe's nose is broken, forcing the France captain to wear a mask for the majority of the rest of the Euros

Spain v France...Lamine Yamal celebrates scoring Spain's stunning equaliser in the semi-final in Munich

Scotland v Hungary...Hungary players hold up the shirt of team-mate Barnabas Varga after the striker suffered a fractured cheekbone in a collision with Scotland goalkeeper Angus Gunn

Portugal v Slovenia ...Cristiano Ronaldo is reduced to tears in extra-time of the last-16 clash having missed a penalty during the game

Netherlands v Austria...*Oranje* supporters embark on their famous "Dutch march" ahead of their final group-game clash

Argentina v Colombia ...an unconscious fan is carried to safety by a police officer after overcrowding outside the Copa America final in Miami *(more on page 64)*

Uruguay v Colombia...Uruguay striker Darwin Nunez goes into the crowd to protect his family after violence breaks out at the end of their Copa semi-final

Argentina v Colombia ...Lionel Messi lifts the Copa America trophy for Argentina *(more on page 58)*

Colombia v Costa Rica...a Colombia supporter dresses in an extravagant costume ahead of the Copa America group-stage clash

Brazil...Christ the Redeemer is lit up in the colours of Colombia ahead of their Copa America final with Brazil's arch-rivals Argentina

Argentina v Colombia...a teary Lionel Messi watches the Copa America final from the bench with a badly swollen ankle

FROM THE EDITOR

At the end of a major tournament, it's always tempting to wonder what might have been, how history might have been written. But for a few twists of fate – a goal-line clearance, a dodgy penalty call, a lucky deflection, a shot inches in another direction – maybe this month's front cover would have Harry Kane on it, or Kylian Mbappe, or Virgil van Dijk or Toni Kroos, instead of Lamine Yamal. Maybe we'd be reflecting on England's depth and resourcefulness, France's dogged knowhow, the Netherlands' next generation or Germany's re-emergence as a serious force at the top table. Littered around the digital trash bins of Europe's finest football writers are all these articles and others, superseded by the stories of Yamal, Nico Williams, Rodri and Spain. And rightfully so – they were the outstanding team of Euro 2024.

Whether the same could be said of Argentina in this year's Copa America is less clear, though it cannot be denied that head coach Lionel Scaloni has created a hugely impressive winning machine. By triumphing in this year's tournament in the United States, they were not only crowned kings of North and South American football, but also won their third consecutive major tournament – matching the great Spanish side of 2008-12.

The signing that we're most excited to announce, however, is that of Henry Winter, who writes his first monthly column for *World Soccer* in this issue

Still, the spotlight at this latest Copa was shining off the pitch just as much as it was on it, with the US preparing to co-host the World Cup in two years' time. If this was the dress rehearsal for 2026, then there is plenty of work left to do before the main event kicks off – as our US correspondent, James Nalton, discovered.

In amongst our coverage of those competitions, plus a few others that took place over the summer, we've found room for the biggest moves of the transfer window so far.

The signing that we're most excited to announce, however, is that of Henry Winter, who writes his first monthly column for *World Soccer* in this issue. Henry is one of the absolute heavyweights of football writing, and we're delighted to have him on board.

Jamie Evans, Managing Editor

AFRICA

AFCON postponed again

The next edition of the Africa Cup of Nations will now kick-off in December 2025, with the final on January 18, 2026, having originally been planned for next summer. Its place in the calendar will be taken by the 2024 Women's AFCON, which will now be delayed a year until July 2025.

The reschedule comes as little surprise, with the original dates for the men's competition always set to clash with FIFA's new Club World Cup, which will take place in the United States next summer.

Morocco will host both African competitions, ahead of co-hosting the 2030 World Cup. Morocco will, however, still take part in qualifying for the men's AFCON, even though their spot is already assured. The rest of the draw for the men's qualification process is as follows, with the top two from each group progressing to the finals:

GROUP A
Tunisia, Madagascar, Comoros, Gambia

GROUP B
Morocco (Q), Gabon, Central African Republic, Lesotho

GROUP C
Egypt, Cape Verde, Mauritania, Botswana

GROUP D
Nigeria, Benin, Libya, Rwanda

GROUP E
Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, Togo, Liberia

GROUP F
Ghana, Angola, Sudan, Niger

GROUP G
Ivory Coast, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Chad

"That video, that moment, those words, do not reflect my beliefs or my character. I am truly sorry"

Chelsea and Argentina midfielder Enzo Fernandez apologises after posting a video of his international team-mates singing an offensive song

AFCON 2025 host...the Ibn-Batouta stadium in Tangiers

GROUP H
DR Congo, Guinea, Tanzania, Ethiopia
GROUP I
Mali, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Eswatini
GROUP J
Cameroon, Namibia, Kenya, Zimbabwe
GROUP K
South Africa, Uganda, Congo, South Sudan
GROUP L
Senegal, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Burundi

A full preview of the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers, which kick-off in September, will follow in next month's issue

ASIA

Asia's route to 2026 World Cup mapped out

The draw for the latest round of AFC World Cup qualifying has been made. The format involves three groups of six teams with the top two from each pool booking their spots in North America, the third and fourth-placed sides competing in a further group stage, and the rest eliminated:

GROUP A
Iran, Qatar, Uzbekistan, United Arab Emirates, Kyrgyzstan, North Korea
GROUP B
South Korea, Iraq, Jordan, Oman, Palestine, Kuwait
GROUP C
Japan, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, China, Indonesia

A full preview of Asia's 2026 World Cup qualifiers, which kick-off in September, will follow in next month's issue

The month in numbers

Eye-catching facts and stats from the world of football this month...

115,000
Planned capacity for the Grand Stade Hassan II in Casablanca, Morocco, which will be built in time for the 2030 World Cup and be the world's biggest football stadium.

955
Days between competitive international appearances for Josip Ilicic, after the Slovenia forward returned from a mental health break at the 2024 European Championship.

109
Argentina goals scored by Lionel Messi, moving him ahead of Iran's Ali Daei as the second-highest goalscorer in men's international football behind Cristiano Ronaldo.

85.7km
Distance covered by England midfielder Declan Rice at Euro 2024, more than any other player at this summer's finals in Germany.

2
Father and son combinations to score at a European Championship, after Italy's Enrico and Federico Chiesa were joined by Sergio and Francisco Conceicao of Portugal.

12
Players that have won the UEFA Champions League and European Championship in the same year, after Spain duo Dani Carvajal and Nacho became the latest to achieve the feat.

36.5km/h
France captain Kylian Mbappe's top speed clocked at Euro 2024, quicker than any other player at the summer's finals.

Speed merchant ...France flyer Kylian Mbappe

Record breaker...Luis Suarez scores against Canada

37
Years and 171 days, age of Luis Suarez when he scored for Uruguay against Canada in the third-place play-off, to become the oldest scorer in Copa America history.

67,215
Capacity of Budapest's Puskas Arena, which will host the 2026 Champions League final.

6
European Championship knockout goals scored by England's Harry Kane, more than any other player in the tournament's history.

4
Major finals that Spain forward Mikel Oyarzabal has played in for club and country – the Olympic Games, Copa del Rey, UEFA Nations League and Euro 2024 – scoring at all four.

45
International goals scored by Jess Fishlock, making her Wales' highest scorer of all time.

6
Assists by James Rodriguez at this year's Copa America, matching the all-time record for a single tournament set by Alex of Brazil in 2004.

14
Years and 293 days, age of Cavan Sullivan when he came off the bench for Philadelphia Union v New England Revolution, replacing Freddy Adu as the youngest player in MLS history.

11
Number of clean sheets kept at major international tournaments by Jordan Pickford, breaking Peter Shilton's England record.

New Column

Henry WINTER

THE VOICE OF FOOTBALL

Euro 2024 met the criteria for a great tournament

Worthy winners ...Spain helped make Euro 2024 a tournament to remember

Summer loving is easy at times. I loved Italia '90 because it was the first tournament I covered and I got to see Diego Maradona in his prime, sliding a right-footed pass through for Claudio Caniggia to score against Brazil in Turin. I loved Euro '96 because England played with boldness and intelligence, and Teddy Sheringham and Alan Shearer took the breath away when ripping apart the Netherlands. I loved Japan & Korea 2002 because of the chance to explore two extraordinary countries, the sight of so many fans mingling merrily and because I realised the three Rs I learned at school could not rival Rivaldo, Ronaldo and Ronaldinho. And I loved Euro 2024 because, setting aside my desire for England to excel, the best team won. Spain made Euro 2024 a tournament to be cherished, one of the greatest summer editions.

> The most exciting and sophisticated team came away with the trophy…it would have been a travesty had Gareth Southgate's laboured side won

Other elements go into such acclaim of a competition: overall quality of football, drama of matches, new stars shining, warmth of welcome, fan experience and organisation. Euro 2024 scored highly on most of those. Supporters certainly had a party and trouble was minimal thanks also to German police knowing when to laugh and when to tell revellers to calm down. The negatives were that some of the football was underwhelming and fans suffered the stop-start rail network. But the most exciting

and sophisticated team came away with the trophy.

Judging a tournament is invariably subjective. I mean, how on earth did Kyle Walker get voted best right-back in the Team of the Tournament by UEFA's esteemed panel of technical observers? Walker was not even in the top five English players in Germany: Marc Guehi, Kobbie Mainoo, Jordan Pickford, Bukayo Saka and Declan Rice did more, plus subs like Cole Palmer. Dani Carvajal presented a more convincing case for inclusion on the right side of defence. In goal, Mike Maignan's a magnificent keeper but Giorgi Mamardashvili of Georgia enhanced his reputation more. Guehi, the only English player who truly rose to the occasion, surely should have got in ahead of Manuel Akanji at centre-back.

Tournaments are invariably viewed through national prisms. England somehow rode their luck, needed rescuing by individual brilliance, reached the final, and a nation dared to dream in Berlin. But it would have been a travesty had Gareth Southgate's laboured side won. As the FA goes about finding and appointing Southgate's successor, it also needs to absorb the lessons of Berlin.

Spain had an identity, balance and a belief in their system that England lacked. They had a boldness and freshness of approach that England lacked. Those thrilling qualities were embodied by their young wingers, Lamine Yamal and Nico Williams, and Luis de la Fuente was fearless enough to start them. Spain had an intelligence and streetwise nous in midfield that England lacked. Rice ran his heart out, Mainoo impressed with his tackling and futsal-influenced calmness taking the ball under pressure but Fabian Ruiz and Dani Olmo were better. In particular, Player of the Tournament Rodri was masterful in acquiring and using possession and knew the exact amount of tactical fouling tolerated by officials.

Southgate had the players to call upon but he didn't possess the ambition and determination to attack that De la Fuente showed with Spain. Southgate's tenure saw him end the club cliques, get players enjoying representing England again, and reunited squad and support – but he wasn't brave enough when it mattered most. Unlike De la Fuente. He, and Spain, deserve all the summer love-in.

Striker's instinct

Overworked ...Spain and Manchester City midfielder Rodri

On the eve of the Champions League final at Wembley, I was on the PFA and FIFPro panel in London to discuss the damage to the game of players over-playing. Public sympathy does not run deep for elite footballers because of the size of their salaries, and clubs have to fund these somehow.

But the statistics are alarming. Rodri of Manchester City and Spain, for example, has played 63, 68, 52 and 67 games in the last four seasons. His workload this coming season will be the same again at the very least, and could conceivably stretch to 86 games including the Club World Cup. Kylian Mbappe could be close to 200 games in three seasons. In statistics to be announced soon by the PFA, Michael Ballack played 4,175 minutes before turning 21. His German compatriot, Florian Wirtz, was almost three times that at 11,495. Jude Bellingham's 18,486 minutes was 3,000 more than Wayne Rooney at 21 (and Rooney was four times David Beckham's total).

I was asked by the panel moderator what the players should do. "Strike," I replied, not completely tongue in cheek. Such a possibility has already been discussed amongst a few (but prominent) players in Premier League dressing rooms. Their clubs are partly culpable with post-season and pre-season tours, but the real danger emanates from FIFA and UEFA with their expanded competitions. Such is the draining nature of this workload, these associations should not be surprised if their tournaments need a tourniquet.

> I was asked by the [PFA and FIFPro] panel moderator what the players should do. "Strike," I replied

Stubner's sad end

On a beautiful sunlit evening in an old farm near England's Weimar training base, I fell into conversation with a former local goalkeeper called Thomas Torsten Jager who gave me some sad news. We were talking about players he grew up with in the old East Germany, those who went on to become superstars like Matthias Sammer and Ulf Kirsten. I mentioned Jorg Stubner, capped 47 times by East Germany and whose talent was celebrated widely at the time. A gifted No.6, and considered by some observers the best GDR player ever, even ahead of Sammer, Stubner gave a particular statement performance against France's Michel Platini in 1985.

But as the old GDR fell apart and the structure of his Dynamo Dresden club loosened, Stubner felt lost without the order, Thomas explained. Stubner's diet went to pieces, his drinking became a problem and then, in his mid-20s, he learned he'd been sacked by Dresden – by letter. He took an overdose, survived, seemed to be putting his life together but passed away in 2019, aged only 53.

Talent...Stubner in action for Dynamo Dresden in the late 1980s

Thomas made a drinking gesture and shook his head mournfully at the waste of such a talent, a reminder for every player to seize the moment.

GOALS we'd like to see again

3 Moment of magic ...Jude Bellingham's stunning overhead kick v Slovakia

1 Record-breaker... Modric's goal made him the oldest-ever Euros goalscorer

1 LUKA MODRIC
CROATIA v Italy

While the emphatic finish was relatively straightforward, the 33 seconds that preceded it were among the most engrossing of the tournament. Gianluigi Donnarumma produced two world-class low saves – first from a Modric penalty, then Ante Budimir's shot – before the ball was fired into the roof of the net by the Croatia captain, prompting furious reactions and remonstrations from Italy's goalkeeper.

2 MIKEL MERINO
SPAIN v Germany

Arguably the best demonstration of the evolution of Spain under coach Luis de la Fuente. Instead of helping to thread endless passes together *tiki-taka* style, this tall midfielder got into the box and on the end of a cross with a textbook header.

3 JUDE BELLINGHAM
ENGLAND v Slovakia

When Bellingham's playing career ends many years from now, this goal will feature prominently in his highlights reel. Delivering in such a critical moment for his team, so late on and with such an astounding piece of skill, is already one of his defining characteristics.

4 SAMET AKAYDIN (OG)
Turkey v PORTGAL

Ten own goals were scored in Germany, one short of the tournament record set at Euro 2020. Perhaps it's unfair to pick on the Turkey defender, given how exciting his team were in attacking mode, but his miscommunication with goalkeeper Altay Bayindir was as baffling as it was comical. The fact that cameras missed it first time around, assuming that the danger had passed, makes it extra worthy of re-watching.

5 LAMINE YAMAL
SPAIN v France

The design of adidas' Euro 2024 ball appeared to lend itself to being curled into the far corner from long range, with several players such as Nicolae Stanciu, Arda Guler, Xherdan Shaqiri, Mattia Zaccagni, Ruben Vargas and Bukayo Saka doing just that. Yet of them all, Yamal's stood out the most: the teenager delivering for his country in the semi-final with a goal that will go down in history.

Jim HOLDEN

AT THE HEART OF THE GAME

From Elland Road to Stateside

Two former Leeds United managers shone at this summer's Copa America

What do you do as a football manager when Leeds United no longer require your leadership? The answer, it seems, is to head across the Atlantic and rejuvenate an international team, and send a refreshing wind of change blowing through the Copa America.

Their shared background at Elland Road is merely coincidence, but the outstanding work of Marcelo Bielsa with Uruguay and Jesse Marsch with Canada in the international arena may prompt more than a few regrets among the supporters of Leeds. What if?

Bielsa has rejuvenated Uruguay to fabulous effect since becoming their coach in May 2023. His team knocked Brazil out of the Copa America in the quarter-finals before narrowly losing 1-0 to Colombia in the semis, playing a brand of exciting football far removed from the dreary cynicism of recent years.

Marsch has made a staggering instant impact at Canada too, also taking them to the semi-finals of a tournament that was staged in the United States as a trial run for the next World Cup in 2026, which they will co-host.

The trial highlighted more than a few potential problems for the first 48-nation World Cup – and let's hope that they can be fixed. One major issue was the quality of the temporary grass pitches placed on top of the artificial surfaces prevalent across American stadiums. The pitch for the final at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami was only installed four days before the match.

Another pressing concern was the high price of tickets that squeezed out ordinary fans. Bielsa was particularly aggravated by this, and spoke out with passion during one memorable press conference at the Copa America.

"Football has more and more spectators, but is becoming less and less attractive," he said. "The game used to be the property of everyone. The poor people who don't have money to buy things to make them happy still had their football, which was free. Now they don't have it any more.

"They are robbing the poor of football, and I think the game is now going on a downward spiral."

Impressive Copa campaigns... Jesse Marsch and Marcelo Bielsa

Bielsa has been a cult manager wherever he has worked, from Santiago to Bilbao to Montevideo. Forever speaking up for the fans is one reason, but he also gets them onside with his entertaining style.

Historic achievements also help; he took Leeds back to the Premier League for the first time in 16 years, and when Uruguay beat Brazil in the current World Cup qualifiers it was the first time they had done so in 22 years.

Another victory came away to world champions Argentina, the first time Uruguay had won against them in ten years – and was mainly due to Bielsa's high-energy style which has inspired so many admirers from Pep Guardiola to Diego Simeone.

Performances at the Copa America confirmed the progress made under the intense guidance of Bielsa, with impressive group-stage wins against Bolivia, Panama and hosts USA. A penalty shootout was required to eliminate Brazil in the quarter-finals, but joy was unconfined.

Canada were also a revelation at the tournament under Marsch, who had only been appointed two months earlier. He is not fondly regarded for his time at Elland Road, but perhaps that was the wrong place at the wrong time for the American.

His fast-paced, high-pressing strategy took Canada to the semi-finals where they unsettled Argentina before succumbing to a 2-0 defeat. Their displays also reminded the hosts what might have been. The US Soccer Federation overlooked Marsch for the head coach role after the last World Cup, instead persisting with Gregg Berhalter, who was swiftly shown the door after seeing his team crash out in the group stage. On this evidence, the Canadians will be stronger than their neighbours and fellow hosts in 2026.

We can't leave the Copa America without a word for another national team transformed. Venezuela were a delight until losing a narrow quarter-final shootout to Canada, and remain on course to qualify for a World Cup for the first time in their history.

Veterans like Salomon Rondon are gelling with the generation of players that took Venezuela to the U20 World Cup final in 2017, including Yangel Herrera, who has shone for Girona.

Herrera spent six years on the books of Manchester City from 2017-23, but never once played for the club who loaned him out every season until selling the midfielder to fellow City Football Group outfit Girona.

It symbolises the corporate convenience of modern football that Bielsa condemns with such vivid eloquence.

Keir RADNEDGE

THE INSIDER

Euro 2024: Hosts deliver

Germany wasn't perfect, but a major tournament back in one footballing nation was most welcome

Tartan Army... Scotland's fans were in fine voice at Euro 2024

The positive legacy of UEFA Euro 2024 was the hosting. This is not to propose that Germany should stage every major tournament, but it is a fact that a single, easily-accessed nation with a (mostly) reliable internal transport system makes for a far more enjoyable experience for supporters, organisers and media (not that we matter so much).

Euro 2024 was mostly a joyous celebration of European fan culture after eight years of logistical stress

Not that everything was perfect – far from it. But all the high attendance figures were not, for once, misleading. Euro 2024 was mostly a joyous celebration of European fan culture after eight years of logistical stress: think the vastness of the Russian 2018 World Cup, the crazily-scattered then pandemic-battered Euro 2020 – delayed by a year until 2021 – followed by the weirdly out-of-body experience that was Qatar 2022.

The fan fun was a welcome change from many football events of the painful past when the spectre of hooliganism depicted all travelling supporters as weaponised invaders to be feared. Not this time. Even heavy-hearted fans slinking away from defeat found their depression leavened by overall enjoyment of the event.

Scotland's supporters were outstanding. Having seen and heard them all around the world, it remains a never-ending source of amazement at how the Tartan Army can erupt, even in cities hundreds of miles from their own matches. "No Scotland, no party!" they chanted – not always in tune, but no-one cared about that.

On odd occasions the fans came too close and fanaticism boiled over. Not thinking so much of the city-centre Anglo-German scuffle on the eve of England's Dusseldorf quarter-final with Switzerland as much as the inevitable continuation of Balkan rivalries. These are ingrained, historic, many-centuries old and far beyond the influence of UEFA fines and official tut-tutting.

So, while Germany delivered in a positive fashion, as expected, organisation was not perfect. One

of the most contentious features was in seeing several local transport operations falling down on the job. Gelsenkirchen was the most infamous. The always-obvious problem with the choice of the Arena AufSchalke was an absence of adequate local accommodation, meaning that fans who poured out of the stadium near-midnight and facing long late-night journeys had their logistical challenge compounded by an inadequate and/or ill-considered S-Bahn operation.

No use telling foreign visitors that Schalke's own fans have no problems – they pose a totally different challenge; travelling locally, walking from their favourite bars or car-sharing. Germany was awarded hosting rights in September 2018, so there is no excuse for the lack of preparation.

A German reputation for efficiency was also tested by a surprise number of tales of cancellations, breakdowns and delays on the national Deutsche Bahn network but these can and will happen anywhere and everywhere (looking ahead with trepidation to Euro 2028 in the UK & Ireland).

UEFA will look back fondly on Euro 2024, not least once it can boast of the anticipated record revenues and media ratings. But maintaining the credibility of the European Championship as one of the world's most popular sporting events is not a given.

The expansion from 16 to 24 teams in 2016 was largely welcomed at the time even though it's an oddity in representing almost 44 per cent of the European federation's membership. This created issues over the qualifying system. Employing the UEFA Nations League as a fall-back, lucky-loser entry option irritated some of the FAs who missed out on the party after their teams fell narrowly short in the qualifying competition proper.

The finals format with 24 teams also needs a fresh appraisal. The system for bringing the four best third-placed teams into the last 16 was plainly unfair because teams in the final few matchdays knew what they needed to progress. This is not to suggest a fix between Romania and Slovakia in their final Group E head-to-head – indeed, both teams played with a real competitiveness – but it is a fact that they kicked off knowing their eventual draw would take them both through.

One suggestion to counter this conundrum would be to increase the finals to 32 teams, but this would further reduce the qualifying competition from a sporting event to a mere TV-cash-generation exercise. It should not be beyond the formatting gurus within UEFA to devise a more nuanced Euro finals operation.

Personally, this writer prefers the 16-team format for both clarity and quality but this, along with a yearning for a mere three substitutes, is wishful thinking.

On that subject, however, a study might be valuable into the negative effect of five substitutes in shutting down matches. Euro 2024 did produce a dramatic quota of late, late goals but the overall scoring tally was significantly down on 2020: 81 goals in the group stage compared with 94 three years ago (four goalless draws compared with two). Still statistics, controversies, mistakes and misjudgements are all part of the territory and the entertainment.

Sometimes it still seems as if UEFA does not always realise what a sporting gem it possesses in the European Championship and fails to communicate this effectively beyond the football world. It was surprising to discover, on the journey from Munich up to the Ruhr and the western heart of the Euros, how many local people had only limited awareness of the football.

These were men and women in shops, restaurants and cafes who had only a vague knowledge of the Euros coming to town. Even local warm-up controversies over prospects for the Germany national team and Julian Nagelsmann's late appointment had not registered.

No doubt this changed with subsequent domestic wall-to-wall media coverage and promotion, but it lit up the essential difference between the FIFA World Cup and the UEFA Euros. The Euros remain, essentially, a football event for sports fans, while the World Cup is an all-embracing cultural phenomenon.

Sometimes UEFA can come over as comparatively small-minded. This, in terms of running and promoting the Euro, is misguided. Think big. Look at the ever-grander models developed by FIFA and the IOC for the Olympics. The fans who flooded through the ten stadia and fan zones in Germany would happily endorse that.

Fan zones...Germany supporters cheer on the hosts in Berlin's *Fanmeile*

Problematic...queues outside the Arena AufSchalke in Gelsenkirchen

BOOKS THIS MONTH

THE SUMMER OF TOTAL FOOTBALL
By Neil Fredrik Jensen (Pitch Publishing, £18.99)

The Summer of Total Football: The 1974 World Cup captures the mood of a memorable 24 days in the early 1970s as the balance of footballing power shifted. This was supposed to be Johan Cruyff's World Cup, and right up until the final he demonstrated why. But West Germany, who were galvanised by their own talisman, Franz Beckenbauer, had other ideas. This was the World Cup of "Total Football", a style of play that is revered to this day.

50 GREAT WORLD CUP MATCHES
By Dominic Hougham (Pitch Publishing, £19.99)

50 Great World Cup Matches...and Why You Should Watch Them is an entertaining guide to the most memorable matches of the last 13 tournaments, from West Germany 1974 to Qatar 2022, analysing 50 great games. Each match is discussed in detail, including its legacy, giving readers a deeper appreciation of the teams and players and how they fit into the World Cup narrative of the last 50 years.

Jonathan WILSON
TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

The cult of the individuals

Coaches building teams around one individual held back some of the strongest squads in Germany

With Portugal leading Switzerland 5-1 at the last World Cup, a large section of the crowd began to shout for Cristiano Ronaldo. After unconvincing displays in the group stage, Ronaldo had been left out by Fernando Santos for the last-16 clash and the coach was rewarded for his boldness as Goncalo Ramos scored a hat-trick. But that wasn't what many in the crowd had come to see. They had come for Ronaldo, to bask in the glow of his celebrity.

Eventually, with the game long since won, Santos gave in. Ronaldo came on and did very little other than scoring a goal that was manifestly offside. He must have known he was well beyond the last man and you could almost see the hesitation before, showman that he is, he gave the crowd what they wanted, running to the corner flag and performing his "Siu" celebration. They roared joyfully, the noise far louder than it had been when Rafael Leao added a sixth (that did count). Who cared the goal wouldn't stand? They had wanted to see Ronaldo doing something characteristic, and now they could tell everybody they knew that they had witnessed the celebration. The rest was detail.

This came as something of a shock. Celebrity had trumped football. It felt like the equivalent of those fans who break off from furiously cursing a missed chance to grin and wave when they see themselves on the big screen, but for the sport as a whole, football reduced to window-dressing for a star.

That continued at Euro 2024. A highly talented Portugal side was hamstrung by Roberto Martinez's insistence on continuing to field Ronaldo, who no longer moves as he once did, whose spring is obviously compromised, whose timing is off and who insists on taking every free-kick in the opposition half, even though he ends up belting them all either into the stands or the wall. It's true that Ramos has not had a great season, but might Diogo Jota not have worked in the role? Or Bruno Fernandes as a false nine? And so Portugal have wasted two glorious opportunities to win tournaments, burdening themselves by continuing to field the most famous player in their country's history.

The cult of the individuals...Kylian Mbappe, Cristiano Ronaldo and Jude Bellingham

> A highly talented Portugal side was hamstrung by Roberto Martinez's insistence on continuing to field Cristiano Ronaldo

But Portugal are just the most egregious example of a wider issue. France under Didier Deschamps have been a consistently successful tournament team, but given the quality and depth of the squad he has been able to draw on for the past decade, there's always a slight sense of disappointment that he has never made any effort to create a team that had an aesthetic quality as well as winning tournaments – might that not actually be more efficient?

Deschamps is naturally inclined to caution, but even if he did wish to play something more progressive, he cannot because of Kylian Mbappe. The newest *Galactico* is one of the world's great forwards, lightning quick and a brilliant finisher, but he is rarely inclined to defensive work. In both the semi-final and final of the World Cup. He had to be moved off the left

Held back? ...Ronaldo and Roberto Martinez

flank into the middle because he was failing to pick up his full-back. So Deschamps is left unable to pursue a co-ordinated modern pressing system. At Euro 2024 he opted for 4-3-1-2, 4-3-2-1 or 4-3-3: a solid platform reliant on the front three for brilliant moments to win games. The result saw them reach the semi-finals – going out to Spain – without managing to score a single goal from open play.

Even England's stodginess in the group stage could be put down to the urge to field Jude Bellingham as a No.10, in the glamour role he occupied for Real Madrid. Except at Madrid he has Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo out wide and running beyond him, with no out-and-out centre-forward. With England he was in the space into which Phil Foden and Bukayo Saka like to cut and into which Harry Kane likes to drop. At the last World Cup, he had played much deeper in a 4-3-3, but it was as though Gareth Southgate had heeded the (anachronistic) calls to build the team around Bellingham. Had he only played deeper, many of the obvious problems in England's structure would have been resolved. This issue was somewhat alleviated in the knockout stages with the change in formation to 3-4-2-1 – where Saka was forced to stay wide at wing-back – and often late on in games when Bellingham was reverted to a deeper role to allow for Cole Palmer's match-changing introductions off the bench.

This is a paradox. Football, especially at club level, has never been so systems-driven. It is guided by data analysis. The best clubs invest heavily in identifying players who fit into the structure, in creating a smooth-running team of 11 coherent sub-units. And yet at international level, the celebrity holds sway.

It may be that at international level, in which managers have little time to work with their squads and often have to work with deeply unbalanced groups of players, simply lends itself more to individual feats of brilliance but, equally, the sense of stodginess about much of the football at Euro 2024 was caused by an obeisance to the celebrity of certain star players.

OBITUARIES

Sporting legend... a tifo for Fernandes

Manuel FERNANDES
(1951-2024)

To this day, Fernandes sits second in Sporting's top goalscorer charts and fourth in all-time appearances. He arrived at the club in 1975 from CUF and quickly made a name for himself thanks to his natural finishing ability. In more than a decade at the club, he scored 260 goals in 441 games and won two league titles, two Portuguese Cups and a Portuguese Super Cup. He then returned to Sporting as a coach; first as an assistant and then as manager, winning the Super Cup again in 2000. He later became a club director, a member of Sporting's scouting department and an ambassador for the Lisbon side, while in later life he was also a commentator.

Celeste ARANTES
(1922-2024)

The mother of Pele, or "Celestinha" as her son affectionately called her, was a role model for the three-time World-Cup winning Brazil great.

Jose Antonio URTIAGA
(1942-2024)

After coming through the youth ranks at Valencia and impressing for the club's reserve side, the forward made his debut for the first team in 1962-63. He scored the winner in the first leg of the final of the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup in 1963 against Dinamo Zagreb, which Valencia went on to win 4-1 on aggregate. Urtiaga then spent two years at Atletico Madrid and a further five seasons at Real Sociedad.

Landry NGUEMO
(1985-2024)

The Cameroon defensive midfielder won 42 caps, featuring in the 2008 Africa Cup of Nations runners-up squad and appearing at the 2010 and 2014 World Cups. He spent most of his club career in France, where he moved to as a teenager, but also had a season-long loan in Scotland with Celtic in 2009-10.

Landry Nguemo... in action for Cameroon

Jeff WHITEFOOT
(1933-2024)

Whitefoot was the last surviving member of Manchester United's Busby Babes side of the 1950s. The wing-half joined the Red Devils from school and became their youngest league debutant against Portsmouth in April 1950, aged 16 years and 105 days. He was part of the 1952 and 1956 title-winning sides under Sir Matt Busby, before leaving for Grimsby in 1957 and then moving to Nottingham Forest, where he made more than 250 appearances in 11 years, lifting the FA Cup in 1959.

Last Busby Babe...Jeff Whitefoot

"As a proud Englishman, it has been the honour of my life to play for England and to manage England. It has meant everything to me, and I have given it my all"

Gareth Southgate announces his departure as England manager

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

52 Moves That Caught Our Eye This Month

IN

OUT

EUROPE

ENZO BARRENECHEA & SAMUEL ILING-JUNIOR
Aston Villa signed the young duo from Juventus for a combined fee of £18.6m.

ROSS BARKLEY
Villa also signed the Luton man for £5m.

MARC GUIU
Chelsea paid £5m to activate the young Barcelona striker's release clause.

NIKOLA MILENKOVIC
Nottingham Forest captured the Serbia centre-back from Fiorentina for £12m.

DAICHI KAMADA
Crystal Palace signed the Japan playmaker from Eintracht Frankfurt on a free transfer.

KASPER SCHMEICHEL
Celtic snapped up the Denmark goalkeeper as a free agent after he exited Anderlecht.

ETHAN MBAPPE
Like his older brother Kylian, Ethan also left Paris Saint-Germain, joining **Lille**.

ALVARO MORATA
Milan signed Spain's Euro 2024-winning striker from Atletico Madrid for a reported £11m.

BEN GODFREY & NICOLO ZANIOLO
Atalanta signed the Everton defender for £10m and Galatasaray's Zaniolo on loan.

LEONARDO SPINAZZOLA
Italy's Euro 2020-winning left-back joined **Napoli** on a free transfer from Roma.

SERGIO GOMEZ
Real Socieded signed the left-back-slash-left-winger from Manchester City for £8.4m.

DONNY VAN DE BEEK
Girona signed the Dutch midfielder from Manchester United for an initial £500,000.

STEVE COOPER & BOBBY DECORDOVA-REID
Leicester City appointed Cooper as manager, who made the Jamaica international his first signing on a free transfer from Fulham.

ALBERT SAMBI LOKONGA & SAUL
Sevilla signed the two midfielders on loan, from Arsenal and Atletico Madrid respectively.

ALLAN SAINT-MAXIMIN
The ex-Newcastle winger joined Jose Mourinho's **Fenerbahce** on loan from Saudi club Al Ahli.

ROBERTO DE ZERBI
Having left Brighton at the end of last season, the Italian manager took charge of **Marseille**.

SCOTT PARKER
The former Fulham boss replaced Vincent Kompany as **Burnley** manager.

VIVIANNE MIEDEMA
The WSL's record scorer joined **Manchester City** after being released by Arsenal.

MARY EARPS
Paris Saint-Germain signed the England Women's goalkeeper from Manchester United.

LUCY BRONZE
The Lionesses first-choice right-back returned to England from Barcelona, joining **Chelsea**.

FRAN KIRBY
Another Euro 2022 winner, attacking midfielder Kirby joined **Brighton** after leaving Chelsea.

GARETH SOUTHGATE
After eight years and 102 matches in charge, the England manager resigned following Euro 2024.

HEIMIR HALLGRIMSSON
The ex-Iceland coach took charge of the **Republic of Ireland** after departing Jamaica.

CRAIG BELLAMY
The former **Wales** forward took charge of the national team, replacing Rob Page.

PATRICK VIEIRA
The coach left **Strasbourg** by mutual consent.

THIAGO ALCANTARA
The Spanish midfielder announced his retirement after leaving **Liverpool**.

RYAN BERTRAND
The ex-Chelsea, Southampton and **England** left-back also announced his retirement.

DUSAN TADIC, JESUS NAVAS, JAN VERTONGHEN, OLIVIER GIROUD, XHERDAN SHAQIRI, THOMAS MULLER
Six high-profile players announced their international retirements after Euro 2024.

SOUTH AMERICA

PHILIPPE COUTINHO
Vasco da Gama brought the midfielder back to Brazil on loan from Aston Villa.

THIAGO ALMADA
The Argentine joined **Botafogo** from Atlanta United ahead of a January move to Lyon, who have the same owner as the Brazilian side.

FERNANDO DINIZ
The ex-Brazil coach was fired for the second time this year after departing **Fluminense**.

FELIX SANCHEZ & DANIEL GARNERO
Ex-Qatar boss Sanchez was axed after leading **Ecuador** to the Copa quarters, while **Paraguay** sacked Garnero following a group-stage exit.

ASIA

HONG MYUNG-BO
South Korea appointed their most-capped player as manager for the second time.

LAURENT BLANC & HOUSSEM AOUAR
Saudi side **Al Ittihad** appointed the former France manager as their new head coach. One of his first signings was Roma midfielder Aouar, who arrived in a €12m deal.

JOSELU
The Spain striker joined Qatari side **Al Gharafa** from Real Madrid.

PIERRE-EMERICK AUBAMEYANG, NACHO, KOEN CASTEELS, JULIAN QUINONES
In a summer splurge, Saudi side **Al Qadsiah** signed Aubameyang from Marseille, Nacho from Real Madrid, Belgium's Euro 2024 goalkeeper Casteels, and Mexico winger Quinones.

CONCACAF

GREGG BERHALTER & JAIME LOZANO
Both the **USA** and **Mexico** fired their head coaches after disappointing Copa Americas.

"I know about the history of young players at Manchester United and feel it can be the perfect place to reach my potential and achieve my ambitions, together with my new team-mates"

Manchester United's new 18-year-old defender Leny Yoro on joining the Old Trafford club from Lille

THE BIGGEST DEALS OF SUMMER 2024

£52.2m	**Leny YORO**	*(Lille to Manchester United)*
£45m	**Michael OLISE**	*(Crystal Palace to Bayern Munich)*
£42.4m	**Douglas LUIZ**	*(Aston Villa to Juventus)*
£42.3m	**Joao PALHINHA**	*(Fulham to Bayern Munich)*
£40m	**Max KILMAN**	*(Wolverhampton Wanderers to West Ham United)*
£38.8m	**ENDRICK**	*(Palmeiras to Real Madrid)*
£37.5m	**Ian MAATSEN**	*(Chelsea to Aston Villa)*
£36.5m	**Joshua ZIRKZEE**	*(Bologna to Manchester United)*
£35m	**Elliot ANDERSON**	*(Newcastle United to Nottingham Forest)*
£33m	**Yankuba MINTEH**	*(Newcastle United to Brighton)*
£30.8m	**SAVIO**	*(Troyes to Manchester City)*
£30.1m	**Alessandro BUONGIORNO**	*(Torino to Napoli)*
£30m	**Kiernan DEWSBURY-HALL**	*(Leicester City to Chelsea)*
£30m	**Igor THIAGO**	*(Club Brugge to Brentford)*
£28m	**Lewis HALL**	*(Chelsea to Newcastle United)**
£27m	**Moussa NIAKHATE**	*(Nottingham Forest to Lyon)*
£27m	**David RAYA**	*(Brentford to Arsenal)**
£26.7m	**Mason GREENWOOD**	*(Manchester United to Marseille)*
£25.6m	**Mats WIEFFER**	*(Feyenoord to Brighton)*
£25.3m	**Hiroki ITO**	*(Stuttgart to Bayern Munich)*
£25m	**Archie GRAY**	*(Leeds United to Tottenham Hotspur)*
£24.9m	**Davide FRATTESI**	*(Sassuolo to Internazionale)**
£24.1m	**Ernest NUAMAH**	*(RWD Molenbeek to Lyon)**
£22m	**Omari HUTCHINSON**	*(Chelsea to Ipswich Town)**
£21m	**Charles DE KETELAERE**	*(Milan to Atalanta)**
£20m	**Taylor HARWOOD-BELLIS**	*(Manchester City to Southampton)**
£20m	**Luis SINISTERRA**	*(Leeds United to Bournemouth)**
£19.5m	**Luis GUILHERME**	*(Palmeiras to West Ham United)*
£19.4m	**Enzo LE FEE**	*(Rennes to Roma)*
£19m	**Waldemar ANTON**	*(Stuttgart to Borussia Dortmund)*
£19m	**Omar KELLYMAN**	*(Aston Villa to Chelsea)*
£18.5m	**Martin TERRIER**	*(Rennes to Bayer Leverkusen)*
£18m	**Flynn DOWNES**	*(West Ham United to Southampton)**
£18m	**Jayden PHILOGENE**	*(Hull City to Aston Villa)*
£17.6m	**Ermedin DEMIROVIC**	*(Augsburg to Stuttgart)*
£17m	**Abdul FATAWU**	*(Sporting to Leicester City)**
£16.9m	**Iliman NDIAYE**	*(Marseille to Everton)*
£16.9m	**Matvey SAFONOV**	*(Krasnodar to Paris Saint-Germain)*
£16m	**Ibrahim OSMAN**	*(Nordsjaelland to Brighton)*
£15.6m	**Georges MIKAUTADZE**	*(Metz to Lyon)*
£15.1m	**Aleix GARCIA**	*(Girona to Bayer Leverkusen)*
£15.1m	**Serhou GUIRASSY**	*(Stuttgart to Borussia Dortmund)*
£15m	**Liam DELAP**	*(Manchester City to Ipswich Town)*
£15m	**Jacob GREAVES**	*(Hull City to Ipswich Town)*
£15m	**Ismael KONE**	*(Watford to Marseille)*
£15m	**Orel MANGALA**	*(Nottingham Forest to Lyon)**
£14.3m	**Mohamed AMOURA**	*(Union Saint-Gilloise to Wolfsburg)*
£14.2m	**Hugo EKITIKE**	*(Paris Saint-Germain to Eintracht Frankfurt)*
£14m	**Cameron ARCHER**	*(Sheffield United to Aston Villa)*
£14m	**Enes UNAL**	*(Getafe to Bournemouth)**
£13m	**Caleb OKOLI**	*(Atalanta to Leicester City)*
£12.9m	**Alvaro DJALO**	*(Braga to Athletic Club)*
£12.9m	**Matteo GUENDOUZI**	*(Marseille to Lazio)**
£12.9m	**Bryan ZARAGOZA**	*(Granada to Bayern Munich)**

**Loan deal turned permanent*

Michael OLISE
The attacking midfielder is 22 years old, has played less than 100 top-flight matches, does not have a senior international cap, is yet to play European football and has become Bayern Munich's fourth-biggest signing ever. Yet in spite of all that, his transfer fee of £45m (potentially increasing to £50m with add-ons) seems like great value given his potential and form at the end of last season. The Frenchman is Bayern's fifth signing from the Premier League in the last two years (in addition to Sadio Mane, Harry Kane, Eric Dier and Joao Palhinha).

Joshua ZIRKZEE
Once tipped as Robert Lewandowski's heir at Bayern Munich, Zirkzee's route to the top has taken a bit of a diversion. After loans at Parma and Anderlecht, he joined Bologna in 2022 and played a key role in last season's fourth-placed finish with 11 goals and four assists. The Dutchman's new coach, Erik ten Hag, praised his ability to link the play, adding: "We have many players who can play very direct and they can take a big benefit from his skills."

Enzo LE FEE
Described by *World Soccer* last summer as "one of his generation's leading talents" following his move from Lorient to Rennes, Le Fee failed to deliver on his promise, recording no goals and just one assist in 25 Ligue 1 games. Hopefully a change of league can improve the 24-year-old's fortunes.

Iliman NDIAYE
The Senegal forward will finally get to play in the Premier League after he joined Everton. Ndiaye, who had been linked with a move to the Toffees in the past, fired Sheffield United to promotion in 2022-23 but left for Marseille before the Blades could play in the top flight. Everton, obviously still very keen on him, finally got their man.

Liam DELAP
Ipswich made an early start to their summer transfer business, making five signings by mid-July, of whom Delap is the most intriguing. The son of former Stoke City throw-in specialist Rory, the England Under-21 striker turned heads with an impressive goal record for Manchester City's Under-23s, but has yet to convert that potential into senior goals in three Championship loans.

Aleix GARCIA
Smart recruitment was at the heart of Leverkusen's record-breaking 2023-24 season, and they appear to have pulled off another coup here. Garcia was one of the main characters in La Liga's own surprise story of last season, helping Girona to third place. Born in Catalonia, he spent much of last season linked with Barcelona, yet opted to join Xabi Alonso's side.

Cameron ARCHER
Archer's move from Sheffield United to Aston Villa is an unusual one, as it came about via a clause in his original deal when moving the opposite way last year. The Blades' relegation triggered an automatic buy-back clause for the striker, who was immediately linked with another move away from Villa Park.

OVERVIEW

SPAIN CROWNED KINGS OF EUROPE ONCE AGAIN

Luis de la Fuente's side proved themselves as worthy winners of Euro 2024

Sometimes European Championships are won by the most outstanding teams, and others by the most effective. In Berlin, when referee Francois Letexier blew the final whistle on Euro 2024, no one could dispute that Spain had been not only the superior team in the final but in the tournament overall.

Germany was a happy, welcoming host, and ease of international access brought lively, excited capacity crowds. On the other hand, the German reputation for efficiency ▸

***Campeones*...Spain lift the Euros trophy**

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took a rail system hit and UEFA needs to learn its own lessons from organisational and logistical shortcomings. All this may be leavened by the correct outcome on the pitch, never mind England's desperate disappointment at becoming the only team to lose two successive Euros finals. They might point to the restrictive injuries being carried by Harry Kane and Jude Bellingham, but the Spanish triumphed despite suffering worse.

The newly-enthroned record four-times champions arrived without Gavi, lost Pedri midway through and then Rodri at half-time in the final. After being contained in the first half, they caught England by surprise after the break through winger Nico Williams. Only wasteful finishing provided substitute Cole Palmer with his equalising chance. By ironic twist, it was Spain's own supersub, Mikel Oyarzabal, who delivered the *coup de grace*.

Spain, always favourites to succeed deposed champions Italy, won all their seven matches with a decisive overall goals tally of 15-4. Luis de la Fuente, their understated 63-year-old coach, thus saw his UEFA Nations League title-holders extend a remarkable Spanish sequence at national team and club level of 27 successive unbeaten finals. He has proved a winner for Spain at Under-17, Under-19 and now senior levels.

England improved immeasurably during the knockout stages after an unimpressive group showing, but it proved too little too late. Unsurprisingly, though perhaps unfairly, post-mortems immediately zoomed in on the managerial fate of Gareth Southgate.

According to UEFA, the final climaxed a month of action that had entertained 2.6m "live" fans and some 2.65bn TV viewers worldwide. Much of the football was not particularly memorable, classy or imaginative, yet it did produce a final between two of the game's traditional powers and UEFA would have been delighted to know that back in September 2018 when it awarded Germany the tournament.

Another final defeat...Harry Kane walks past the trophy

The Germans duly produced ten stadia – with Berlin staging its third major final after the 2006 World Cup and 2015 Champions League – along with the inevitable mascot. In one of those odd quirks of event life, the bear –named Albart – would even be cloned by a would-be Stuttgart pitch invader.

Most tournaments lean heavily on the progress of the host team for momentum. A year out this was a problem for the DFB, but it was resolved more positively than they had expected by the replacement last September of luckless Hansi Flick with Julian Nagelsmann.

The first time Germany hosted a major tournament they won the 1974 World Cup; the second time, they reached the semi-finals at Euro 1988; third time, the 2006 World Cup, they finished third. This time around, they made only the quarter-finals but, in the circumstances, it was enough.

> Much of the football was not particularly memorable, classy or imaginative, yet it did produce a final between two of the game's traditional powers

Outcomes in the run-up had been far from encouraging but ultimately Nagelsmann's *Mannschaft* hit the ground running with perfect timing against Scotland in Munich.

Every team need a little luck, and Germany's fortune was the dismal Scottish display. Florian Wirtz and the outstanding Jamal Musial struck within the first 18 minutes before Kai Havertz converted a penalty. Scotland had centre-back Ryan Porteous sent off and substitutes Niclas Fullkrug and Emre Can added two more goals after the break. The overrun visitors could not even claim a shot to call their own; their lone strike was a Antonio Rudiger own goal.

A follow-up victory over a fragile Hungary virtually ensured Germany's spot in the last 16 before a 1-1 draw with Murat Yakin's well-organised Switzerland tempered the initial euphoria. Germany entertained with energetic, attacking football but their defence was shaky.

Switzerland went through as runners-up while Hungary and Scotland flew home. The Scots have now reached 12 major tournaments without escaping the group stage.

Group B also sent only two teams into the last 16. Spain won their first two matches, including a 1-0 dismissal of defending champions Italy, playing some classy football along the way. Coach Luis de la Fuente could afford to make ten changes for the concluding 1-0 win over a plucky Albania. Italy's last-gasp 1-1 draw with a fading Croatia meant that for the first time since 2014, the Luka Modric generation failed to pass Go at a major tournament.

Quality avoided Group C which produced three 1-1 draws, two goalless stalemates and just the one victory – by a single goal, of course. England were the winners with a first-half header from Jude Bellingham, Serbia the losers.

Denmark must have been kicking themselves all the way home for not showing a little more courage in their 1-1 draw with England. Victory would have reversed the teams' positions at the top of the table, almost certainly to the Danes' benefit. At least they offered the welcome sight of Christian Eriksen back in Euro action after his cardiac arrest in 2021. He was player of the match in their concluding draw with Serbia.

Boy wonders...Spain's young wingers Lamine Yamal and Nico Williams with their medals

THINGS WE LEARNED

1 MORE EXPANSION IS COMING
As expected, the 24-team format brought more cons than pros, with a group stage that incentivises draws and gives an unfair advantage to teams in Groups E and F. UEFA will need little persuading to increase to 32 teams, especially if it allows them to expand the Nations League in place of the current Euros qualifying process. Georgia, the lowest-ranked team on show in Germany, proved that there is plenty of depth to Europe's quality.

2 SOMETHING'S GOT TO GIVE
The debate around the match calendar and player workloads is not going to go away. Many of the players that looked visibly shattered in Germany will already be off on pre-season tours around the globe ahead of a 2024-25 season that, for some, will culminate in next summer's FIFA Club World Cup.

A different kind of striker...Alvaro Morata

3 NO MORE NUMBER NINES
With the likes of Cristiano Ronaldo and Romelu Lukaku failing to make an impact, and targetmen like Niclas Fullkrug, Wout Weghorst and Olivier Giroud largely restricted to cameos, the most successful teams were led by less traditional strikers. Of the two finalists, Spain's Alvaro Morata is a selfless, roaming, low-scoring striker, while Harry Kane spent much of the tournament dropping deep rather than occupying centre-backs. None of the other five players that shared the Golden Boot with the England captain could be considered typical No.9s either: Ivan Schranz and Cody Gakpo scored their goals from the wing, Dani Olmo and Jamal Musiala served as number tens and, although Georges Mikautadze wore the number nine shirt, he is a counter-attack dribbler as much as he is a poacher.

4 THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT
It's not just that the average age of players at the Euros fell for the second time in a row, nor even that so many of the decisive players at the finals – Lamine Yamal, Nico Williams, Jude Bellingham, Jamal Musiala, Florian Wirtz, Xavi Simons, Arda Guler – were aged 21 or younger (or much younger). What unites many of those youngsters is their maturity, their decision-making, and their ability to rise to the biggest occasions – all traits that used to be considered beyond such tender years. That they are now so common suggests something different in this generation.

5 FREE-KICKS FADING
No direct free-kicks were scored at Euro 2024, continuing a trend set at Euro 2020 when only one went in. Rather than players being less accurate, team now seem more cautious.

In Group D, France disappointed. The two-time winners misfired through a 1-0 win over Austria, a 0-0 draw with the Netherlands and a further 1-1 draw with Poland. The nose fracture against Austria, which reduced the attacking efficiency of captain Kylian Mbappe, exposed a surprising number of frailties in both selection and set-up, for all the relentless energy of N'Golo Kante.

Poland were also handicapped by injury, in their case to Robert Lewandowski. He started only the concluding 1-1 draw with France, which was marked by penalty goals for the group's two high-profile crocks. Ralf Rangnick's surprisingly proactive Austria took simultaneous, deserved advantage to beat the Dutch 3-2 and top the group.

Spirited Romania, a repetitively disappointing Belgium and Slovakia progressed from a pedestrian Group E, which ended with all teams level on four points. Belgium coach Domenico Tedesco seemed crushed by the pressure but at least his Red Devils progressed. Luckless Ukraine gathered only sympathy and admiration in finishing bottom of the table on goal difference.

The flaw in the best third-placed system meant both Slovakia and Romania knew they needed only a point in their concluding last match to progress. Happiness was a 1-1 draw.

The greatest passion was generated in Group F by the noisy excitability of the "home" fans of Turkey and tournament newcomers Georgia. Teenager Arda Guler on the one hand and fleet-footed Khvicha Kvaratskhelia on the other swept individual honours. Georgia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili was their next hero in a concluding 2-0 defeat of Portugal; simultaneously Turkey's 2-1 victory over Czech Republic exploded chaotically with a Euros record number of cards shown.

The quality of the group-stage football had been patchy with four goalless draws and only eight of the 36 matches seeing a team score three goals or more. Rigid, disciplined organisation was the order of the day as many coaches ordered up highly-populated tight lines between defence and midfield. This forced the stronger teams (notably England) into an endless horizontal shuffling of the ball. Spain were exceptions with their exciting options of wingers Lamine Yamal and Nico Williams.

The round of 16 was bereft of surprises. France, Germany, Spain, Turkey and the Netherlands all won in 90 minutes, as did Switzerland in toppling Italy's crown more easily than the 2-0 scoreline suggested. Two matches ran long. A Cristiano Ronaldo-obsessed Portugal beat Slovenia only on penalties after a goalless draw, while England's 2-1 victory over Slovakia generated more drama than the other seven matches put together. Supporters' patience was stretched to the limit before Bellingham's superb last-gasp overhead kick earned extra-time, which began with captain Kane notching the winner.

Ronald Koeman's Dutchmen, easing Turkey 2-1, were the only winners in 90 minutes as fear gripped the quarter-finals. France and England ended up shootout winners against Portugal and Switzerland respectively, while Spain punctured German hopes with a 2-1 extra-time victory in Stuttgart. Mikel Merino re-enacted family history in celebrating his winning goal by running around a corner flag, 33 years after father Angel had celebrated there in just such a manner after scoring for Osasuna in a UEFA Cup tie.

In the semi-finals, Spain went on to recover from an early header by Randal Kolo Muani to beat France 2-1. Yamal not only equalised by scoring one of the goals of the finals with a curler from outside the penalty box, but also set up the winner for Dani Olmo. Barcelona's latest wonderkid Yamal had made history against Croatia in the groups on becoming the youngest player in Euros history at 16 years, 338 days; he was now the youngest scorer too, at 16 years, 362 days.

England imitated Spain in Dortmund, winning similarly against Netherlands and also after conceding a fine opening goal by Xavi Simons. They responded with by far their best football of the finals, levelling with a contentious Kane penalty then winning in the last minute, with substitutes Cole Palmer and Ollie Watkins combining. That cameo earned the duo their chance in the final, again as subs, but even they couldn't stop Spain.

So near and yet so far – and no cause for complaint, either.

Keir Radnedge

Match-winner...Mikel Oyarzabal pokes home the winner past England's Jordan Pickford

Touchdown...*La Roja* coach Luis de la Fuente brings the trophy back to Spain

A TO Z

A is for Arda Guler. The teenage sensation showed quality on the international stage to help fire Turkey to the quarter-finals.

B is for Big games. Spain defeated Italy in their group before knocking out Germany and France to reach the final.

C is for Comeback. England were the first team to reach a Euros final having been behind in the last 16, quarter-final and semis.

D is for Debutants. In Georgia's first-ever major tournament, they offered plenty of entertainment and intrigue.

E is for Experience. Aged 41 years, 130 days, Portugal centre-back Pepe became the oldest player to appear at a European Championship.

Broken nose...France talisman Kylian Mbappe wearing his protective mask

F is for Flower of Scotland. Their team disappointed but Scotland fans' rendition of their national anthem was a highlight.

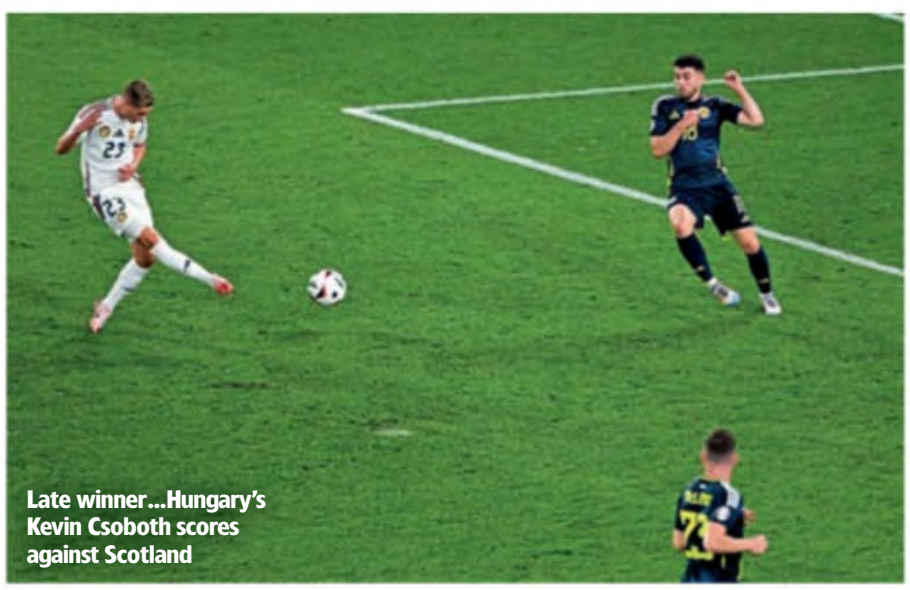
G is for Giorgi of Georgia. Mamardashvili was our goalkeeper of the tournament, making a string of impressive saves.

H is for Hosts. There was a party atmosphere across Germany and inside stadiums in its historic football cities.

I is for Italian coaches. Five teams were led by an Italian, including the *Azzurri* themselves, managed by Luciano Spalletti.

J is for Juxtaposition. The Copa America took place at the same time, with both finals on the same day.

K is for Kane. The England captain was not at his best but still contributed and finished joint-top scorer at the finals.



Late winner...Hungary's Kevin Csoboth scores against Scotland

Screamer...Turkey wonderkid Arda Guler scores one of the goals of the tournament against Georgia

Euro 2024 joint-top goalscorer...Georges Mikautadze scored three times to share the Golden Boot with Harry Kane, Dani Olmo, Ivan Schranz, Jamal Musiala and Cody Gakpo

Shootout star...Portugal's Diogo Costa saving one of three penalties against Slovenia

L is for Latest goal. Kevin Csoboth's winner for Hungary v Scotland in the tenth minute of added time was the latest in tournament history during regulation time.

M is for Mikautadze. Few would have predicted the Georgia striker as a Golden Boot winner, even if he did have to share it with five others.

N is for Nose. Kylian Mbappe's broken nose proved damaging, with the France captain struggling to sleep and uncomfortable in the mask he was prescribed.

O is for Own goals. "Own goal" led the scoring charts with ten, one off Euro 2020's record of 11.

P is for Pyramid. All but seven of England's squad have played in the EFL, including semi-final hero Ollie Watkins who played in the sixth tier for Weston-Super-Mare.

Q is for Quickest goal. Nedim Bajrami scored for Albania against Italy after 23 seconds, the quickest in Euros history.

R is for Rebuild. A common phrase in international football following disappointing performances, which might apply to Belgium, Italy and Scotland.

S is for Screamers. Some suggest that long-range shooting is being discouraged by data analysis, but this tournament proved otherwise.

T is for Trains. Fans travelling around Germany via the country's train network were met with long delays and overcrowding.

U is for Unbeatable. Portugal goalkeeper Diogo Costa saved a tournament-record three penalties against Slovenia in their round-of-16 shootout.

Young coach...Julian Nagelsmann

V is for Vocal. Several France players used their profiles to oppose far-right politics during their country's elections.

W is for Wonderkid. Turning just 17 the day before the Euros final, Spain winger Lamine Yamal was one of the tournament's standout players.

X is for Xavi Simons. Another young talent who scored a semi-final stunner against England but was distraught after defeat.

Y is for Youngest manager. At 36 years, 327 days old, Julian Nagelsmann became the youngest coach in Euros history.

Z is for Zwayer, the referee who awarded England a controversial penalty in their semi-final win over Netherlands.

PLAYERS OF THE TOURNAMENT

Flying save...Georgia's Giorgi Mamardashvili makes an acrobatic stop against Portugal

GOALKEEPER

GIORGI MAMARDASHVILI
(Georgia)
Made more saves (29) than any other keeper in the tournament despite his side going out in the last 16, with 11 of those coming against the Czech Republic – one short of the record for a single Euros group-stage game.
Honourable Mentions:
Mert Gunok (Turkey) – his save against Austria will go down as one of the Euros' finest; **Diogo Costa** (Portugal) – became the first-ever goalkeeper to save three penalties in one shootout; **Jordan Pickford** (England) – made some vital saves but his kicking wasn't at its best; **Bart Verbruggen** (Netherlands) – solid and an effective distributor.

RIGHT-BACK

JOSHUA KIMMICH
(Germany)
His qualities were already well known but he once again flaunted his elite technical ability. When Germany exited in the quarter-finals, only one player (Denmark's Christian Eriksen) had created more chances for his side than Kimmich.

Impressive...Kimmich was as reliable as ever

Honourable Mentions:
Stefan Posch (Austria) – a key cog in Austria's well-drilled unit; **Joao Cancelo** (Portugal) – like Nuno Mendes on Portugal's other side, improved as the tournament progressed; **Dani Carvajal** (Spain) – feisty and determined, summed up by his cynical-yet-smart red card in the quarter-final; **Jules Kounde** (France) – continued to impress despite being a natural centre-back; **Otar Kakabadze** (Georgia) – continually flying up and down the right flank.

CENTRE-BACKS

PEPE
(Portugal)
The oldest-ever player to feature at the Euros, not that you'd have known he turned 41 years old in March from his displays. Used all his experience to get the better of forwards almost half his age.

Emotional...Pepe breaks down in tears

WILLIAM SALIBA
(France)
Didier Deschamps took a long time to be convinced, but his eventual faith in the Arsenal centre-back was repaid with some assured performances. Calm on the ball and confident in the tackle.
Honourable Mentions:
Manuel Akanji (Switzerland) – didn't put a foot wrong until his penalty miss v England; **Riccardo Calafiori** (Italy) – a cursory glance would see the Italian's own goal and suspension, but he caught the eye with his marauding forays into midfield; **Marc Guehi** (England) – deputised for the injured Harry Maguire and greatly impressed on his major tournament debut; **Jaka Bijol** (Slovenia) – the powerhouse dominated aerial duels; **Radu Dragusin** (Romania) – shone for the surprise side of the tournament with some real body-on-the-line performances; **Antonio Rudiger** (Germany) – the man mountain was his usual commanding self.

LEFT-BACK

MARC CUCURELLA
(Spain)
Perhaps to many a surprise starter for *La Roja* at the beginning of the tournament, but their unsung hero. Always competitive in defence and set up the winning goal in the final.
Honourable Mentions:
Ferdi Kadioglu (Turkey) – a constant menace going forward, and at the point of Turkey's elimination no player had made more tackles than the right-footed left-back; **Nuno Mendes** (Portugal) – the marauding youngster impressed with his pacy and powerful runs; **Michel Aebischer** (Switzerland) – caught the eye, particularly in the group stage, as a left-wing back who drifted into midfield and helped dictate play.

MIDFIELDERS

RODRI
(Spain)
Won the Player of the Tournament award and finished with 93 per cent passing accuracy. Further proved why he is no longer simply just a defensive midfielder, with heavy influence at both ends of the pitch.

FABIAN RUIZ
(Spain)
Excellent from the off, the graceful left footer provided goals and assists, and constantly recovered possession. Also produced one of the best bits of skill at the finals, leaving three Germans stranded with one turn.
Honourable Mentions:
Toni Kroos (Germany) – broke his own Euros group-stage record for most completed passes (324) in his swansong; **N'Golo Kante** (France) – the 33-year-old rolled back the years with his trademark energetic displays; **Granit Xhaka** (Switzerland) – his side's heart and soul was almost faultless in dictating the tempo of matches; **Tijjani Reijnders** (Netherlands) – with license to roam, the silky midfielder was an eye-catcher; **Jude Bellingham** (England) –

Deadly duo... Lamine Yamal and Nico Williams celebrate together

England's thrust in times of need; **Giorgi Kochorashvili** (Georgia) – a constant bundle of energy and creation; **Vitinha** (Portugal) – almost everything good Portugal did came through him in midfield; **Stanislav Lobotka** (Slovakia) – the metronomic No.6 was one of the Euros' best holding midfielders.

FORWARDS

LAMINE YAMAL
(Spain)
The Euros' youngest-ever player, assist maker (getting four in total), goalscorer and winner. To produce such performances at his age was nothing short of astonishing. His semi-final wonderstrike against France will remain one of the Euros' most iconic moments.

JAMAL MUSIALA
(Germany)
Started out wide but naturally found himself in a more central attacking position, from which he scored his first Euro goals. Was often Germany's source of inspiration, with only one player completing more dribbles.

NICO WILLIAMS
(Spain)
Yamal might have stole more of the limelight, but the direct and pacy winger was arguably more incisive. Showed why he is the subject of such transfer interest.

DANI OLMO
(Spain)
In a finals lacking outstanding No.9s, floating forward Olmo caught the eye, first as an impact sub and then as the injured Pedri's replacement in Spain's line-up as a No.10. With three goals and two assists, nobody registered more goal involvements.

Honourable Mentions:
Georges Mikautadze (Georgia) – the joint-top scorer impressed with his all-round play in a finals in which strikers struggled to influence games. His pace helped make his nation a counter-attacking threat alongside team-mate Khvicha Kvaratskhelia; **Arda Guler** (Turkey) – the talented teenager became the youngest-ever player to score on his Euros debut; **Jeremy Doku** (Belgium) – the tournament's most successful dribbler was his side's brightest spark; **Cody Gakpo** (Netherlands) – much like another ex-Dutch winger in Arjen Robben, Gakpo is so good at what he does – cutting in from the wing onto his stronger foot; **Marcel Sabitzer** (Austria) – another contender for the central attacking midfield role; **Dan Ndoye** (Switzerland) – hit his first Swiss goal in the game versus Germany and was a constant threat; **Ivan Schranz** (Slovakia) – three goals in just four games is hard to ignore; **Bukayo Saka** (England) – his attacking numbers don't do him justice while his willingness and versatility proved indispensable.

***Wunderkind*...Jamal Musiala caught the eye**

TEAM OF THE TOURNAMENT

TEAM BY TEAM *group-stage exit*

SCOTLAND

Steve Clarke's side could not match the quality of their travelling Tartan Army support, and departed having shown little across three games. A tournament opener against the hosts was always going to be tough, but the manner of the 5-1 defeat to Germany set alarm bells ringing. A 1-1 draw with Switzerland offered some hope, but a late Hungary goal in the all-important final group game confirmed Scotland's exit emphatically, even though they were unlucky not to be awarded a penalty earlier in the game.

HUNGARY

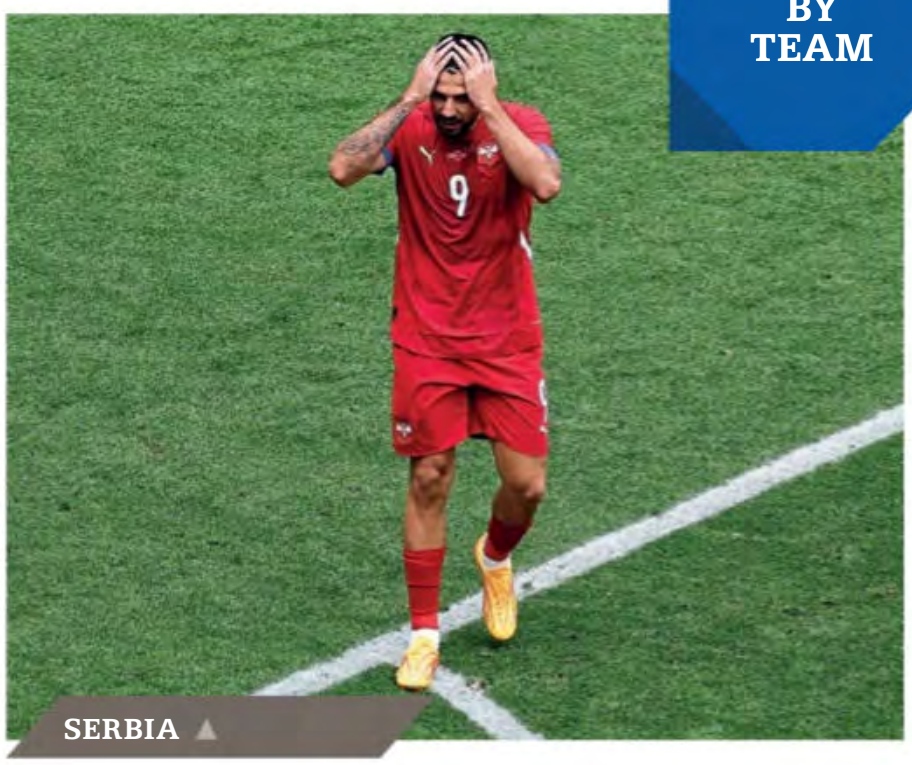
As Scotland slumped out, Hungary celebrated. Kevin Csoboth's goal in the tenth minute of added time sparked wild celebrations as it gave them a chance to progress as one of the best third-placed teams. Those celebrations turned into an anxious three-day wait until the final day of group-stage matches when Georgia's victory against Portugal meant Hungary lost their place in the knockouts. Though they were unable to live up to their billing as dark horses, they still had that brief moment versus Scotland as a positive note to look back on.

CROATIA

Luka Modric looked dejected as he was named Player of the Match following the 1-1 draw with Italy in Croatia's final group game. They had been 1-0 up and on their way through to the knockout rounds thanks to Modric's goal ten minutes into the second half, but a dramatic 98th-minute equaliser from Italy changed the state of Group B. In the blink of an eye, it took Croatia from expected progress to what felt like the end of an era. "Please never retire," one journalist implored 38-year-old Modric after the match.

ALBANIA

A group with Italy, Spain and Croatia was always going to be tough, but when Nedim Bajrami scored after just 23 seconds in Albania's game against Italy – the European Championship's fastest-ever goal – it showed they were not in Germany just to make up the numbers. Italy eventually won 2-1, but that memorable goal and the 2-2 draw with Croatia, thanks to Klaus Gjasula's dramatic stoppage-time equaliser, meant Albania left their mark on this tournament. They exited having scored more goals in the group stage than France, England and Belgium.



SERBIA

Group C was the least inspiring of all the groups, and from that dull ensemble, a disappointing Serbia side ended up with the worst record. They were the only team to lose, to group favourites England, before going on to scrape a 1-1 draw against Slovenia courtesy of a late Luka Jovic goal. Two 0-0 draws in the last set of games of this group summed it up, and Serbia's stalemate with Denmark meant they finished bottom, with Jovic's strike against Slovenia their only goal of the tournament.

POLAND

Robert Lewandowski's re-taken penalty in Poland's 1-1 draw with France in their final group game saw the striker become only the third player (with Cristiano Ronaldo, on five, and Luka Modric) to score in four separate Euros finals. That draw gave them their only point in the group though, with the Poles already eliminated before the game kicked off. They played like a team that had won just three of eight games in qualifying, and now have some serious work to do ahead of future tournaments.

UKRAINE

It was an emotional tournament for Ukraine who were applauded by their travelling fans despite exiting early. The team managed a win against Slovakia and a draw with Belgium, but it somehow wasn't enough. Teams in other groups progressed with fewer points, and Ukraine became the first team in Euros history to claim four points but still finish bottom of their group. A 3-0 defeat in their opener versus Romania made their task more difficult than it needed to be, but in their remaining games they restored pride if not progress.

CZECH REPUBLIC

It was a roller-coaster ride of a tournament for Ivan Hasek's Czech Republic, who started so promisingly when they took the lead against Portugal in their first outing. Portugal came back to win 2-1 before the Czechs could only draw 1-1 with Georgia in their next game despite creating plenty of chances. An unfortunate, but probably correct, red card for Antonin Barak for two bookable offences with only 20 minutes played of their final game against Turkey gave them an uphill battle they ultimately couldn't win.

TEAM BY TEAM *round-of-16 exit*

ITALY ▲

The defending champions won just half of their qualifiers, leading to being seeded in pot four and a difficult group-stage draw featuring fellow heavyweights Spain. Things didn't improve at the finals either, as they won just once in Group B, with Luciano Spalletti appearing undecided on both his formation and personnel. Against Croatia in their final group game, a 98th-minute Mattia Zaccagni goal saw Italy progress in a brief moment of elation – at the expense of their opponents – but the *Azzurri* were completely outplayed by their neighbours Switzerland in the last 16 and went out with a whimper.

DENMARK ▼

A spirited performance and a thunderstorm delay in Denmark's knockout game against Germany preceded an unlucky turn of events. Joachim Anderson thought he had scored the opener but saw his goal disallowed due to a most marginal offside in the build up. Shortly after, a penalty was given against him for handball despite the ball hitting his hand from close range. The Danes felt hard done by, but they might have given themselves an easier task if they hadn't drawn all their group games, conceding a late equaliser to Slovenia in their opener and failing to find a way past fourth-placed Serbia.

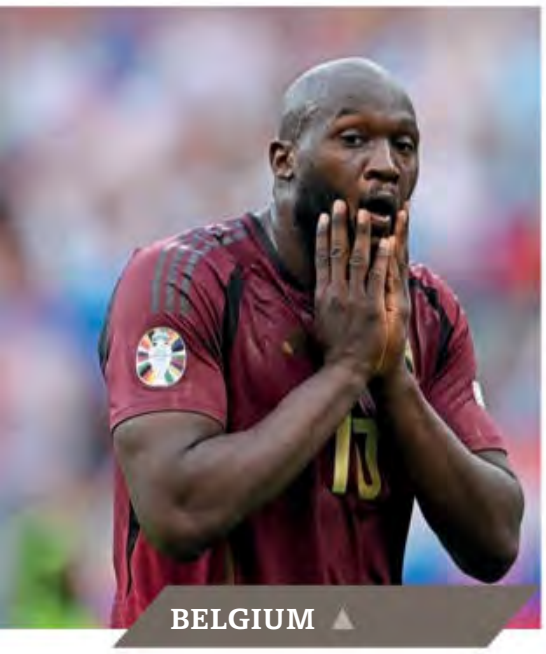
SLOVAKIA ▲

After scoring the goal that defeated Belgium in an opening game upset, Ivan Schranz looked to have repeated the trick as Slovakia made it past 90 minutes with a 1-0 lead against England in the first knockout round. Then came that Jude Bellingham overhead kick in added time and Harry Kane's winner in extra-time. It dashed Slovakian hopes just as quickly as it restored England's.

Despite an excellent showing and a very respectable set of group-stage results, Francesco Calzona's side were distraught to exit in this manner with the finishing line in sight.

GEORGIA ▼

A good performance in defeat to Turkey – one of the games of the tournament – was a sign of things to come. Georgia's enterprising play saw them draw 1-1 with the Czech Republic and produce an upset win over a much-changed Portugal in game three. Star player Khvicha Kvaratskhelia opened the scoring in that game and goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili regularly impressed, as the lowest-ranked nation far exceeded expectations. The reward was a last-16 tie with Spain in which they took the lead before losing 4-1. Georgia lit up the Euros in their first appearance at a major tournament and were greeted back home in the capital Tbilisi with a heroes welcome.



BELGIUM

Applause from the Belgian fans as their team exited the tournament was in stark contrast to the boos players received as they stumbled through Group E following a 0-0 draw with Ukraine. Having lost to Slovakia in the opener – where Romelu Lukaku had two goals ruled out by VAR interventions – Belgium's unconvincing displays saw them finish second behind Romania and served up a difficult last-16 tie v France. Some tactical tinkering from Domenico Tedesco to get more attacking players in the line-up didn't quite work, and though fans recognised the players' effort, they were also fully aware of another underperformance.

SLOVENIA

Like Denmark, Slovenia progressed from Group C without having won a game. A 0-0 draw with England gave them the point that saw them through on goal difference in the ranking of third-place teams. They proved difficult to beat once again in a knockout tie with Portugal that needed a penalty shootout to decide the winner after Jan Oblak had saved a Cristiano Ronaldo penalty in extra-time. But Diogo Costa would prove to be their nemesis, as the Portugal keeper saved three Slovenian penalties out of three having already kept out Benjamin Sesko in a one-on-one in extra-time. They exited the tournament unbeaten over 90 minutes.

ROMANIA

Romania played their part in some early tournament entertainment with a 3-0 victory against Ukraine featuring a wonder strike from Nicolae Stanciu. Replicating that performance proved difficult, but that convincing win contributed to Romania topping Group E ahead of Belgium on goals scored. Unfortunately for them, they drew the strongest of the third-place qualifiers in the knockout rounds, the Netherlands, and were on the end of one of the more convincing performances by any team to that point, exiting to a 3-0 defeat but with their heads held high.

AUSTRIA

A statement group victory against the Netherlands confirmed Austria as a force to be reckoned with in international football under Ralf Rangnick. The pleasing on the eye and well-drilled outfit had lost only once in qualifying, and brought that form with them to Germany. Only the hosts scored more goals than Austria's six in the group stage, and their last-16 tie against Turkey was one of the games of the tournament. There was some possession to go with Rangnick's trademark pressing, but they couldn't use it to find a way past a stubborn Turkey despite creating numerous chances.

TEAM BY TEAM *Quarter-final exit*

PORTUGAL ▲

It felt like the biggest question for Portugal was how best to deploy a 39-year-old Cristiano Ronaldo. Roberto Martinez's answer was to play him in all but 24 minutes of their group games – where Portugal enjoyed a standout 3-0 win against Turkey but also a shock 2-0 defeat to Georgia – and for 120 minutes in two knockout ties that went to penalties. One was won against Slovenia, but the other lost against heavyweights France. 41-year-old Pepe stood out as Portugal bowed out. Ronaldo, who struggled to affect games, might bow out too.

GERMANY ▼

The epic quarter-final showdown between Germany and Spain would have been an appropriate final. Tournament football occasionally throws up a heavyweight clash earlier in the knockout rounds and these Euros provided us with such a treat, though Germany may not have seen it that way. After one of the more convincing group-stage performances, and eventually showing their quality in the last 16 against Denmark, they faced one of the strongest teams and exited the tournament they hosted. Plenty to build on for Julian Nagelsmann; his first task will be replacing the retiring Toni Kroos in midfield.

SWITZERLAND ▲

Murat Yakin's side were strong quarter-final contenders after outclassing Italy in the last 16. Having reached this stage for the second tournament in a row, they weren't just there to make up the numbers. They matched England, and at times were better, until being knocked out on penalties when Manuel Akanji's spot-kick was saved by Jordan Pickford. Unbeaten in their group, drawing with Scotland and Germany after a statement opening win against Hungary, they wouldn't have been out of place in the semi-finals.

TURKEY ▼

Epitomised by the quality and endeavour of teenage star Arda Guler, justifying Real Madrid's move for him last year, Turkey entertained in Germany and contributed greatly to the Euros storyline. There was a positive unpredictability about them, evident from their opening victory against Georgia to their subsequent 3-0 defeat to Portugal. They knocked out an impressive Austria thanks to a monumental performance from defender Merih Demiral, but lost to the Netherlands having taken the lead. Even as they exited, they still showed flashes of the play that had brought them this far.

SEMI-FINALISTS: FRANCE

France stumbled their way through the tournament without playing as well as they should have done. Star player Kylian Mbappe broke his nose in the opener against Austria and wore a mask for a few games before discarding it as an annoyance. Their only goals in Group D were an own goal and an Mbappe penalty. Another own goal got them through against Belgium, and a goalless draw with Portugal was won on penalties. They finally scored their first goal in open play in the semi-final against Spain, but lost 2-1.

SEMI-FINALISTS: NETHERLANDS

Having progressed to the knockout stages as the best of the teams finishing third in their respective groups, the Netherlands turned on the style against Romania in the last 16, winning 3-0. They were the only nation to win in normal time in the quarter-finals, where they defeated Turkey. It was a good tournament for 21-year-old Xavi Simons and Liverpool forward Cody Gakpo, but even though the former opened the scoring in the semi-final against England, they were knocked out by Ollie Watkins' dramatic late winner.

RUNNERS-UP: ENGLAND

An unconvincing group-stage performance was followed by a couple of dramatic late comebacks. A shift to a back three in the quarter-final against a very good Switzerland side helped get Jude Bellingham and Phil Foden into better positions, although a penalty shootout was still required to get through. The semi-final performance against the Dutch offered real hope that England could be an attacking force, and suggested that Cole Palmer and Ollie Watkins deserved to start in the final, where the Three Lions badly lacked pace and runners in behind up front. Palmer scored off the bench, but ultimately it wasn't enough.

WINNERS: SPAIN

Spain were the best team throughout the tournament, and backed up their performances with results. They also showed a different side to their game – not always dominating possession, as per the typical Spanish approach, and being far more thrusting and direct from wide positions, happy to create chances from crosses rather than always trying to score the perfect goal. Lamine Yamal, only 17 a day before the final, was one of the standout players along with fellow winger Nico Williams. They combined for the opener in the final before Mikel Oyarzabal scored the winner. Dani Olmo's late clearance off the line from Marc Guehi was just as vital and celebrated like a goal.

FINAL

SUNDAY JULY 14, 8PM

SPAIN (0) 2
(Williams 47, Oyarzabal 86)

ENGLAND (0) 1
(Palmer 73)

Olympiastadion, Berlin. Att: 65,600 Ref: Letexier (Fra)

Match-winners... Nico Williams and Mikel Oyarzabal celebrate for Spain

SPAIN Simon – Carvajal, Le Normand (Nacho 83), Laporte, Cucurella; Rodri (Zubimendi 46), Fabian; Yamal (Merino 89), Olmo, Williams; Morata (Oyarzabal 68)
■ Olmo

ENGLAND Pickford – Walker, Stones, Guehi, Shaw; Mainoo (Palmer 70), Rice; Saka, Foden (Toney 89), Bellingham; Kane (Watkins 61)
■ Kane, Stones, Watkins

GOALS

1-0 Lamine Yamal, cutting inside from the right, rolls the ball across the area to Nico Williams, who steers it home on the run.

1-1 Collecting a Bukayo Saka pass, Jude Bellingham lays the ball back to substitute Cole Palmer who, from 20 yards out, casually yet powerfully guides it into the far bottom corner.

2-1 Spain sub Mikel Oyarzabal, narrowly onside, stretches to prod in an inch-perfect low cross from raiding left-back Marc Cucurella.

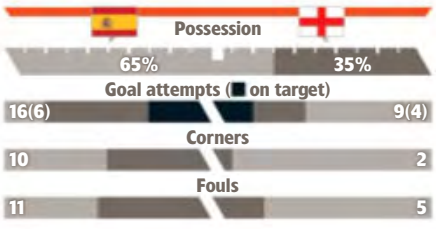
"It's been a marvellous day, the crowning moment for a real team. For me, they are the best in the world. The greatest. These players are an example for everybody"
Spain coach Luis de la Fuente

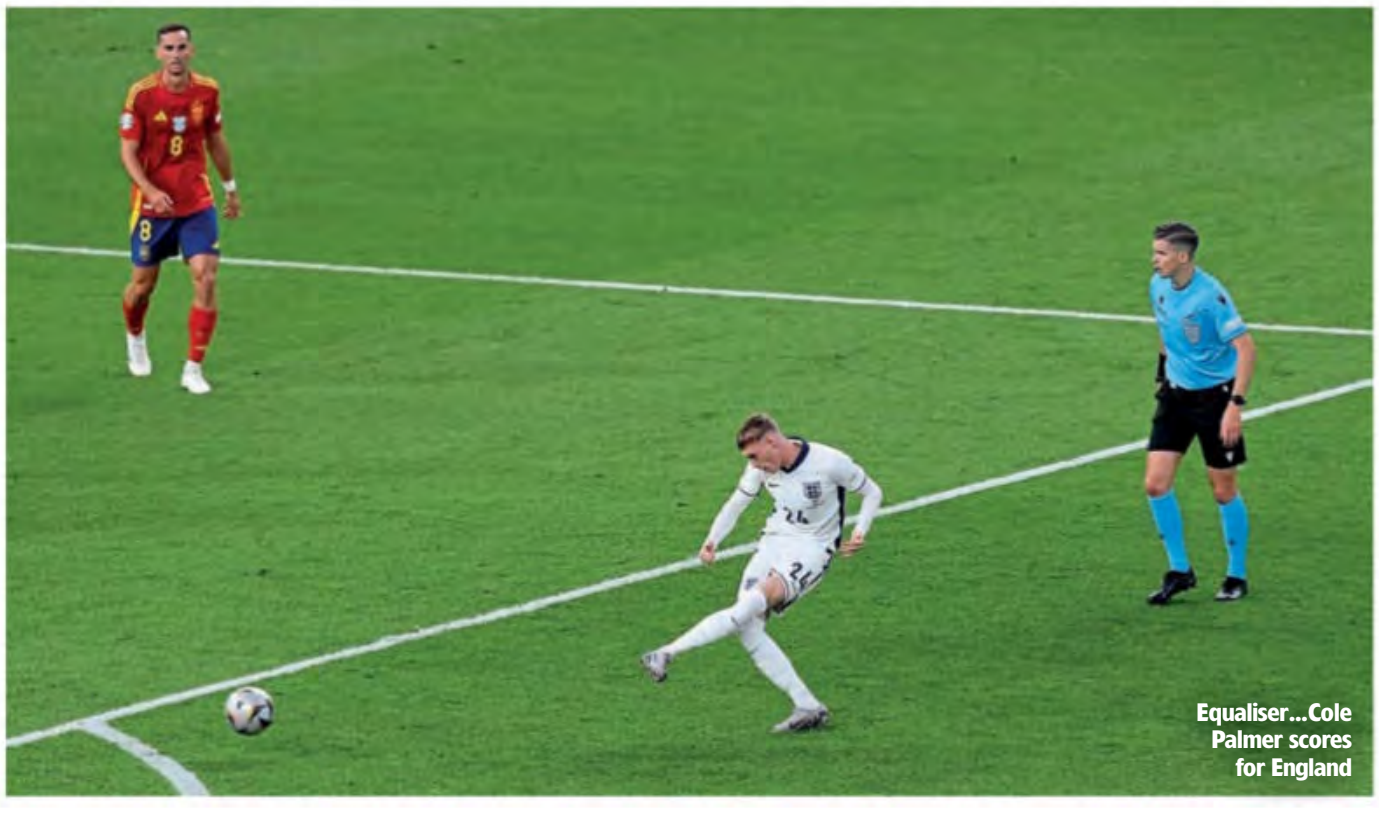
SPAIN INFLICT ENGLISH PAIN

This fascinating clash of Spain, multiple recipients of international gold in the last decade-and-a-half, and an England team desperate to claim their first piece of silverware since the 1966 World Cup proved a close-run affair, in the balance right down to the wire. But no one could argue that *La Roja*, who sealed victory in Berlin thanks to Mikel Oyarzabal's late winner, did not deserve to clinch their record-breaking fourth European Championship crown. Luis de la Fuente's merry men, playing with a marked spring in their step, were the most attractive and effective side at the tournament, winning all seven of their games without the recourse of a penalty shootout. They were also, undoubtedly, the most impressive team in the final, in control for long periods, creating the most dangerous chances, superior in their pressing game and boasting the substantial wide threat of sensational tyros Nico Williams and Lamine Yamal. Sufficiently resilient and strong mentally to drag themselves back from the brink on several occasions in the tournament – notably coming from behind to win their three previous knockout-round ties – England had developed the qualities of the Alien that cannot be killed, and that sort of gritty inviolability was again on display here. Despite a lack of possession and territorial gains, this is an incurably stubborn England side that can never be counted out. When substitute Cole Palmer adroitly levelled with 20 minutes remaining, an against-the-odds comeback was again on the cards and even at 2-1 down with the sands of time ebbing away, the Three Lions almost produced another equaliser, both Declan Rice and Marc Guehi seeing headers cleared off the line by Spanish keeper Unai Simon and exultant playmaker Dani Olmo. Ultimately, though, England simply did not have enough of the ball to prevail. Too often they gave it away cheaply and Spain's wonderful passing and movement eventually wore them down. Only now and then did England build up a head of steam and without the second-half heroics of Three Lions custodian Jordan Pickford, who twice saved smartly from Yamal, the margin of defeat would have been wider.

MATTER OF FACT

No other nation can equal Spain's haul of five titles this century (three European Championships, a World Cup and the UEFA Nations League).




Equaliser...Cole Palmer scores for England

SEMI-FINALS

TUESDAY JULY 9, 8PM

SPAIN (2) 2
(Yamal 21, Olmo 25)

FRANCE (1) 1
(Kolo Muani 9)

Allianz Arena, Munich. Att: 62,042 Ref: Vincic (Svn)

Boy wonder... Lamine Yamal

SPAIN Simon – Navas (Vivian 58), Nacho, Laporte, Cucurella; Rodri, Fabian; Yamal (Torres 90+3), Olmo (Merino 76), Williams (Zubimendi 90+3); Morata (Oyarzabal 76)
Navas, Yamal

FRANCE Maignan – Kounde, Upamecano, Saliba, Hernandez; Kante (Griezmann 62), Tchouameni, Rabiot; (Camavinga 62), Dembele (Giroud 79), Kolo Muani (Barcola 62), Mbappe
Tchouameni, Camavinga

GOALS

0-1 Kylian Mbappe clips in a cross from the left and Randal Kolo Muani rises to nod in.
1-1 Lamine Yamal gets on the ball some 25 yards out in the inside-right channel, jinks to create space, then unleashes an unstoppable curler into the top corner.
2-1 A headed clearance falls to Dani Olmo, who cuts out Aurelien Tchouameni with an exquisite touch and thumps a cross-shot home via Jules Kounde's leg.

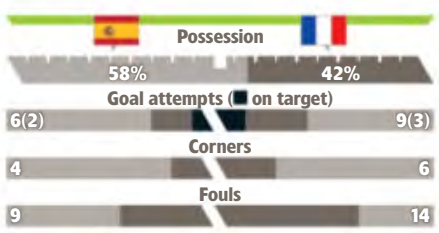
A STAR IS BORN

If there was any doubting the prodigious talent of boy wonder winger Lamine Yamal, they were ended here. Yet while the teenager was the standout performer, this was a complete Spain performance – as exhilarating going forward as they were solid defensively. They simply had too much quality for a one-dimensional French team built on steely diligence and an unhealthy reliance on Kylian Mbappe magic. The Spaniards did not bat an eyelid when France took an early lead. They simply redoubled their efforts, masterfully dictating terms and turning the match on its head in a four-minute first-half spell. For most of that opening 45, France, who had kept clean sheets in four of their previous five Euro 2024 ties, were in danger of suffering a technical knockout, befuddled by the threaded pass artistry of *La Roja* and the pace and movement on the flanks of opposition young guns Yamal and Nico Williams. France pressed hard for an equaliser in the later stages, only to be undone by a string of wasteful final balls, headed chances that went begging and Spain's all-consuming determination to reach their fifth European championship final.

"The work the team put in tonight was enormous, especially in defence"
Spain coach Luis de la Fuente

MATTER OF FACT

At 16 years and 362 days old, Lamine Yamal is the youngest goalscorer in men's Euros history.



WEDNESDAY JULY 10, 8PM

NETHERLANDS (1) 1
(Simons 7)

ENGLAND (1) 2
(Kane 18 pen, Watkins 90)

Westfalenstadion, Dortmund. Att: 60,926 Ref: Zwayer (Ger)

Supersub strike... Ollie Watkins' winner

NETHERLANDS Verbruggen – Dumfries (Zirkzee 90+3), De Vrij, Van Dijk, Ake; Schouten, Reijnders; Malen (Weghorst 46), Simons (Brobbey 90+3), Gakpo, Depay (Veerman 35)
Dumfries, Van Dijk, Simons

ENGLAND Pickford – Walker, Stones, Guehi; Saka (Konsa 90+3), Mainoo (Gallagher 90+3) Rice, Trippier (Shaw 46); Foden (Palmer 81), Bellingham; Kane (Watkins 81)
Bellingham, Saka, Trippier

GOALS

1-0 Xavi Simons picks the pocket of Declan Rice some 35 yards from goal, advances to the edge of the box and unleashes an unstoppable rocket that files into the top corner.
1-1 A difficult chance falls to Harry Kane, who can't quite get over it and fires over. In his follow through, Kane comes into contact with Dutch right-back Denzel Dumfries. A VAR review awards a penalty which Kane dispatches.
1-2 With his back to goal, Ollie Watkins receives a Cole Palmer pass, sweetly turns Stefan de Vrij and from the tightest of angles rifles the ball, low and hard, into the far corner. Cue English euphoria.

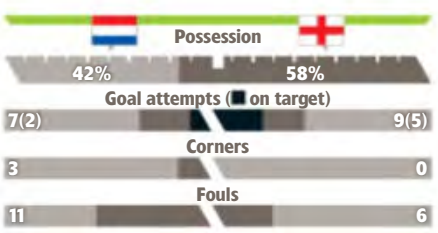
WONDERFUL WATKINS

In yet another late show from the Three Lions, Gareth Southgate's men once again prevailed at the death at Euro 2024, sealing their second consecutive European Championship final appearance courtesy of supersub Ollie Watkins' brilliant last-minute strike. While there was more than a hint of controversy surrounding England's equalising penalty at 1-1 – bringing them back into game after Xavi Simons' stunning opener for the *Oranje* – they thoroughly deserved their victory, in the ascendancy for long periods against the Dutch and playing with much more energy and purpose than in their previous games in Germany. England cut a particularly impressive figure in the first half, with Phil Foden much to the fore, having an effort cleared off the line by Dumfries and hitting the post with a long-range shot. The second 45 was more attritional and even, until substitutes Palmer and Watkins combined for the sensational denouement.

"It's the best feeling ever. I don't know how to describe it. I'm the happiest man ever. I've worked so hard to get to this point"
England match-winner Ollie Watkins

MATTER OF FACT

Victory here took England into a final on foreign soil for the first time in the men's team's history.



QUARTER-FINALS

FRIDAY JULY 5, 5PM

SPAIN (0) 2
(Olmo 51, Merino 119)

GERMANY (0) 1
(Wirtz 89)

After Extra-Time; 1-1 at 90 mins
MHPArena, Stuttgart. Att: 54,000 Ref: Taylor (Eng)

Perfect header ...Mikel Merino

SPAIN Simon – Carvajal, Le Normand (Nacho 46), Laporte, Cucurella; Rodri, Fabian (Joselu 102); Yamal (Torres 63), Pedri (Olmo 7), Williams (Merino 80); Morata (Oyarzabal 80)
■ Le Normand, Torres, Simon, Carvajal, Rodri, Fabian
■ Carvajal

GERMANY Neuer – Kimmich, Rudiger, Tah (Muller 80), Raum (Mittelstadt 57); Can (Andrich 46), Kroos; Sane (Wirtz 46), Gundogan (Fullkrug 57), Musiala; Havertz (Anton 91)
■ Rudiger, Raum, Andrich, Kroos, Mittelstadt, Schlotterbeck, Wirtz, Undav

GOALS

1-0 Insufficiently closed down on the right, Lamine Yamal rolls an inviting ball across the penalty box for Dani Olmo to sweep home.
1-1 Maximilian Mittelstadt's cross is headed back into the danger zone by Joshua Kimmich. Florian Wirtz hits home a controlled half-volley.
2-1 Spain substitute Mikel Merino hangs in the air basketball style to forcefully nod in Dani Olmo cross.

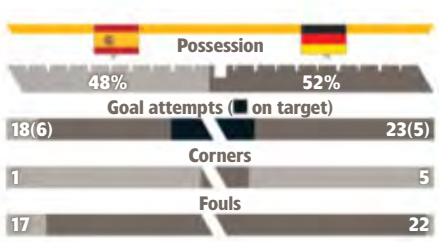
MERINO SHATTERS HOSTS

How ironic that Spain midfielder Mikel Merino, who flopped during an unhappy, short-lived spell at Borussia Dortmund in the 2016-17 season, turned out to be Germany's nemesis. Merino, now with Real Sociedad, never made a meaningful contribution at the Westfalenstadion, but certainly did in this thoroughly exciting Clash of the Giants, breaking German hearts with a magnificent headed winner in the last minute of two hours of combat. After a rather cagey opening half, a period of little flow and rhythm, the game truly exploded into life in the second half, Germany forced to take risks after going behind and eventually drawing level at the eleventh hour. The drama continued in extra-time. Mikel Oyarzabal and Florian Wirtz both went close, Spanish keeper Unai Simon pulled off a great save from supersub Niclas Fullkrug and German penalty appeals for a handball by Marc Cucurella were dismissed. In a breathless final act, Merino struck, closely followed by Dani Carvajal's expulsion for a second yellow card.

"We got so close and that makes it even more painful"
Germany's Toni Kroos on his last-ever game before retirement

MATTER OF FACT

After scoring, Merino mimicked the celebration of his father, Angel, when Merino Senior scored on the same ground for Osasuna in 1991.



FRIDAY JULY 5, 8PM

PORTUGAL (0) 0

FRANCE (0) 0

After Extra-Time; 0-0 at 90 mins, France win 5-3 on penalties
Volksparkstadion, Hamburg. Att: 47,789 Ref: Oliver (Eng)

Decisive...Joao Felix's penalty hits the post

PORTUGAL Costa – Cancelo (Semedo 74), Dias, Pepe, Mendes; Palhinha (R. Neves 90+2), Vitinha (Nunes 119); B. Silva, Fernandes (Conceicao 74), Leao (Felix 106); Ronaldo
■ Palhinha

FRANCE Maignan – Kounde, Upamecano, Saliba, Hernandez; Kante, Tchouameni, Camavinga (Fofana 91); Griezmann (Dembele 67); Kolo Muani (Thuram 86), Mbappe (Barcola 106)
■ Saliba

PENALTIES (France first)

Dembele	1-0	1-1	Ronaldo
Fofana	2-1	2-2	B. Silva
Kounde	3-2	3-2	Felix (post)
Barcola	4-2	4-3	Mendes
Hernandez	5-3		

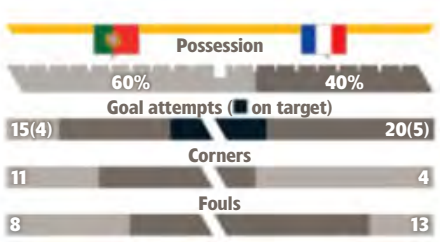
SHOOTOUT SETTLES HEAVYWEIGHT STALEMATE

A blank scoreboard was always likely for this showdown despite the array of star names. Going into this quarter-final, neither side had looked sharp going forward, with France failing to score a single goal from open play (relying on two own goals and a penalty) – and Kylian Mbappe still obviously hindered by the effects of his broken nose – and Portugal goalscoring standard bearer Cristiano Ronaldo suffering with his own goalscoring demons. Instead of a festival of attacking football, what panned out was a chess game short on offensive ideas and long on defensive rigour. France, for whom Arsenal centre-back William Saliba was outstanding, are a tough nut to crack indeed, while Portugal, marshalled superbly by golden oldie stopper Pepe, proved just as watertight at the back. Only occasionally did the deadlock come under real threat: France keeper Mike Maignan magnificently thwarting Bruno Fernandes and Vitinha; Portugal centre-back Ruben Dias making a last-ditch block to divert a Randal Kolo Muani effort, Eduardo Camavinga dragging a wonderful chance wide and Ronaldo miscuing a Francisco Conceicao cut-back over the bar in extra-time. Portugal substitute Joao Felix was the only one to miss in the shootout, hitting the outside of the post.

"When we need to tip the balance in our favour, we're on it"
France coach Didier Deschamps

MATTER OF FACT

The game produced no fewer than 35 shots, the most-ever in a goalless draw at the Euros.



SATURDAY JULY 6, 5PM

ENGLAND (0) 1
(Saka 80)

SWITZERLAND (0) 1
(Embolo 75)

After Extra-Time; 1-1 at 90 mins, England win 5-3 on penalties

Merkur Spiel-Arena, Dusseldorf. Att: 46,907 Ref: Orsato

England's saviour ...Bukayo Saka

ENGLAND Pickford – Walker, Stones, Konsa (Palmer 78); Saka, Mainoo (Shaw 78), Rice, Trippier (Eze 78); Foden (Alexander-Arnold 115), Bellingham; Kane (Toney 110)
■ Kane

SWITZERLAND Sommer – Schar, Akanji, Rodriguez; Ndoye (Zakaria 98), Freuler (Amdouni 118), Xhaka, Aebischer (Sierro 118); Rieder (Zuber 64), Vargas (Widmer 64); Embolo (Shaqiri 110)
■ Schar, Widmer

GOALS

0-1 Dan Ndoye sends a low cross from the right to the far post, where Breel Embolo steals ahead of Kyle Walker to prod home.

1-1 Bukayo Saka cuts inside from the right wing and curls a low, left-footed beauty in off the far post.

PENALTIES (England first)

Palmer	1-0	1-0	Akanji (saved)
Bellingham	2-0	2-1	Schar
Saka	3-1	3-2	Shaqiri
Toney	4-2	4-3	Amdouni
Alexander-Arnold	5-3		

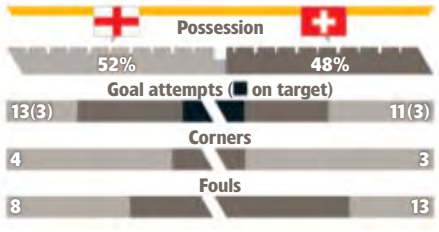
SAKA SAVES SOUTHGATE

In Gareth Southgate's 100th match in charge of England, the Three Lions once again displayed their escapologist abilities, forced to dig deep to keep a vibrant and well-organised Swiss side at bay and finally prevailing thanks to a perfect set of shootout kicks and Jordan Pickford's save from Manuel Akanji. In a not-too-distant past, it was England who suffered with penalty psychosis. The Swiss have the same ailment, losing four out of five shootouts in major tournaments. England, through to their fourth European Championship semi-final (after 1968, 1996 and 2020), once again proved a stumbling Euro 2024 enigma, disjointed as a unit and offering little in the final third. But what they do have is resilience and belief in spades and the presence of several individual magic-makers, among them Jude Bellingham and this game's standout star Bukayo Saka. The Swiss will feel hard done by indeed. Murat Yakin's men were dominant for most of the second half and had England hanging on in extra-time, especially when Xherdan Shaqiri hit the woodwork from a corner and Pickford made a smart stop to deny Zeki Amdouni.

"Winning tournaments isn't just about playing well. You've got to show other attributes to win"
England boss Gareth Southgate

MATTER OF FACT

Bukayo Saka's equaliser on 80 minutes was England's first shot on target in the game.

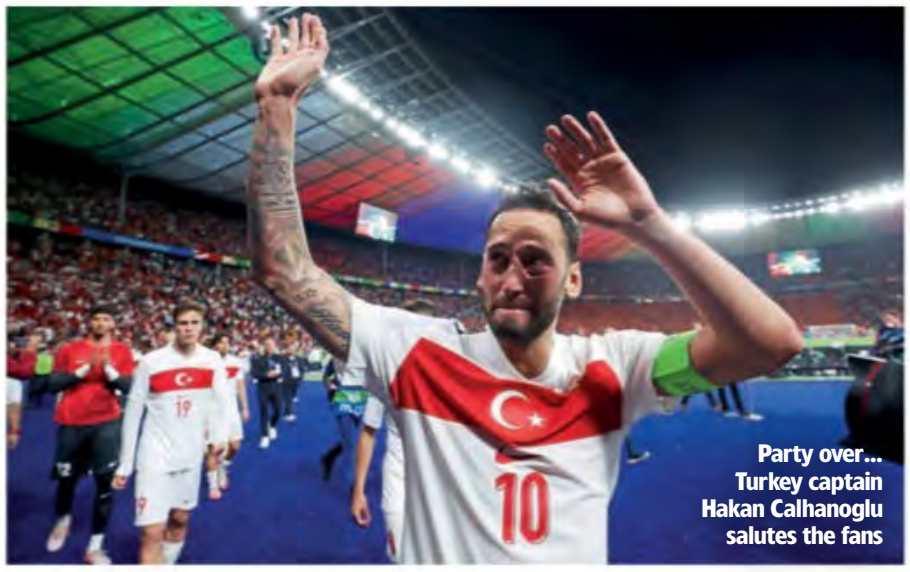


SATURDAY JULY 6, 8PM

NETHERLANDS (0) 2
(De Vrij 70, Muldur 76 og)

TURKEY (1) 1
(Akaydin 35)

Olympiastadion, Berlin. Att: 70,091 Ref: Turpin (Fra)



Party over... Turkey captain Hakan Calhanoglu salutes the fans

NETHERLANDS Verbruggen – Dumfries, De Vrij, Van Dijk, Ake (Van de Ven 73); Schouten, Reijnders (Veerman 73); Bergwijn (Weghorst 46), Simons (Frimpong 87), Gakpo; Depay (Zirkzee 87)
■ Simons, Ake, Van Dijk, Weghorst

TURKEY Gunok – Ayhan (Kilicsoy 89), Akaydin (Tosun 82), Bardakci; Muldur (Celik 82), Ozcan (Yokuslu 77), Calhanoglu, Kadioglu; Guler, Yilmaz, Yildiz (Akturkoglu 77)
■ Tosun ■ Yildirim

GOALS

0-1 Arda Guler whips in a cross with his weaker right foot. Dutch goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen is in no-man's land and Samet Akaydin thumps home the header.

1-1 Unmarked Dutch centre-back Stefan De Vrij nods in a Memphis Depay centre.

2-1 Denzel Dumfries crosses low from the right to the far post. Under pressure from Cody Gakpo, Mert Muldur concedes the own goal.

TURKISH FUN COMES TO AN END

Two goals in six second-half minutes was enough for the Netherlands to flip this tie on its head, transforming a one-goal deficit into a ticket for their first European Championship semi-final in 20 years. After Turkey took the lead late in the first half, a positive *Oranje* reaction was a long time materialising, with defenders of the quality of skipper Virgil van Dijk, Nathan Ake and Denzel Dumfries having off-days and showing precious few ideas to help launch attacks. But one thing the Dutch do have is heart, and taking inspiration from the arrival on the scene of target man substitute Wout Weghorst they successfully built up a crucial head of steam. Turkey, roared on by their "home" support, certainly had their chances to stretch their lead post-interval, Arda Guler hitting the post with a free-kick and Weghorst making a miraculous life-saving intervention in his own box. Faced with a concerted late spell of Turkish pressure, the Dutch bent but refused to break, Verbruggen saving their bacon in stoppage time with a fine point-blank stop from Semih Kilicsoy.

"No one expected us, this young team, to progress to this stage. I'm really proud of my team-mates"
Turkey captain Hakan Calhanoglu

MATTER OF FACT

Turkey forward Bertug Yildirim, who was red-carded in the dugout in stoppage-time, did not play a single minute at the tournament.

ROUND OF 16

SATURDAY JUNE 29, 5PM

SWITZERLAND (1) 2
(Freuler 37, Vargas 46)
ITALY (0) 0

Olympiastadion, Berlin. Att: 68,172 Ref: Marciniak (Pol)

Opener... Remo Freuler

SWITZERLAND Sommer – Schar, Akanji, Rodriguez; Ndoye (Sierro 77), Freuler, Xhaka, Aebischer (Steffen 90+2); Rieder (Stergiou 71), Vargas (Zuber 71); Embolo (Duah 77)

ITALY Donnarumma – Di Lorenzo, Mancini, Bastoni, Darmian (Cambiaso 75); Cristante (Pellegrini 75), Fagioli (Frattesi 86), Barella (Retegui 64); Chiesa, Scamacca, El Shaarawy (Zaccagni 46)
■ Barella, El Shaarawy, Mancini

GOALS

1-0 Ruben Vargas plays a low pass from the left flank into the box in the direction of advancing midfielder Remo Freuler, who sets himself up with a wonderful first touch and adroitly volleys the ball into the bottom corner.
2-0 Italy carelessly give the ball away within seconds of the restart. Switzerland break forward down the left wing, with the ball ending up on the edge of the box at the feet of Vargas, who sends a spectacular curling effort past a helpless Gianluigi Donnarumma.

SWISS STUN HOLDERS

So much for the so-called experts who predicted a tight, tense and tactical affair with every chance of a penalty shootout; instead, we had the classic one-horse race. Switzerland dominated from first to last while the Italians, reigning European champions, chased shadows, left dazed and confused by their opponents' aggressive press, deft passing triangles and intelligent positional inter-changing in the attacking third. The bare minimum for an Italian side is to be well prepared, physical and opportunistic. Sadly for the *Azzurri*, even the basics were not on show in Berlin. Little wonder Italy coach Luciano Spalletti made six changes to his line-up, a sure sign of panic. It might have been even more comfortable for Switzerland, as striker Breel Embolo snatched at his finish when clean through on goal and the much-underrated Fabian Rieder almost caught out Donnarumma with a free-kick whipped to the near post.

"We have to stay modest and keep our feet on the floor"
Switzerland coach Murat Yakin

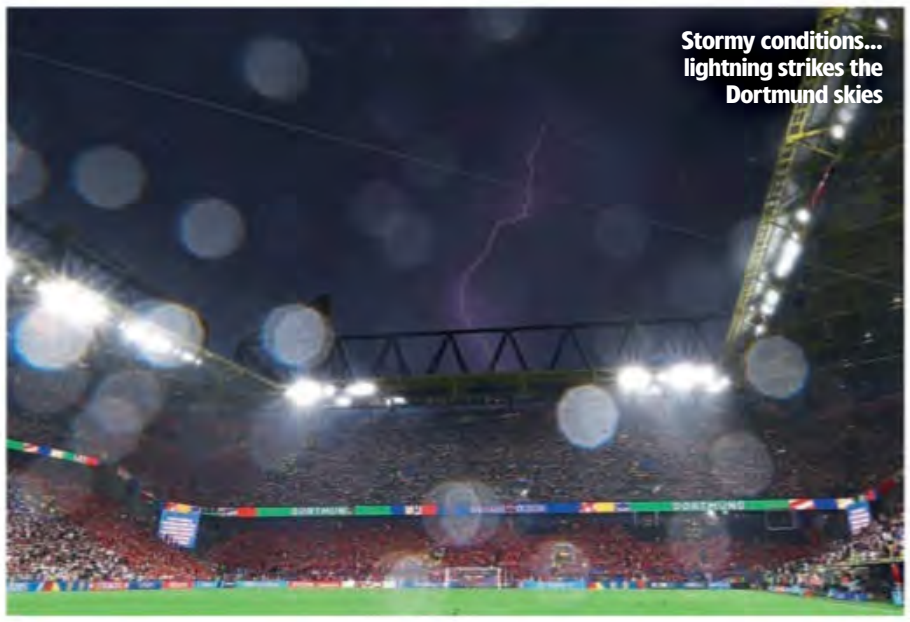
MATTER OF FACT

This was Switzerland's first win against Italy in 13 international encounters across three decades.

SATURDAY JUNE 29, 8PM

GERMANY (0) 2
(Havertz 53 pen, Musiala 68)
DENMARK (0) 0

Westfalenstadion, Dortmund. Att: 61,612 Ref: Oliver (Eng)


Stormy conditions... lightning strikes the Dortmund skies

GERMANY Neuer – Kimmich, Rudiger, Schlotterbeck, Raum (Henrichs 81); Andrich (Can 64), Kroos; Sane (Anton 88), Gundogan (Fullkrug 65), Musiala (Wirtz 81); Havertz

DENMARK Schmeichel – Andersen, Vestergaard, Christensen (Bruun Larsen 81); Bah (Kristiansen 81), Hojbjerg, Delaney (Norgaard 69), Maehle; Skov Olsen (Poulsen 69), Eriksen; Hojlund (Wind 81)
■ Andersen, Maehle

GOALS

1-0 A David Raum cross brushes the outstretched arm of adjacent Denmark centre-back Joachim Andersen. Following a VAR review, a spot-kick is awarded, which Kai Havertz accurately dispatches.
2-0 Nico Schlotterbeck releases Jamal Musiala down the left. Now in the clear, Musiala advances, opens his body and coolly steers the ball into the far corner of Kasper Schmeichel's net.

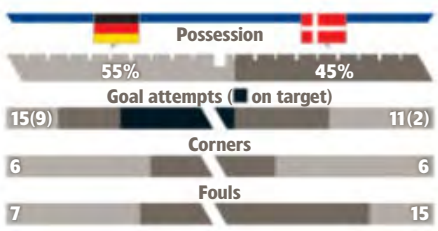
RAIN AND DANES SWEPT ASIDE

On a night of thunder, lightning and torrential rain in the Ruhr – forcing the game to be suspended for 20 minutes towards the end of the first half – Germany booked their ticket to the quarter-finals. The hosts were undoubtedly the better side, technically superior and more dangerous going forward. Indeed, such was their domination in the opening 20 minutes that they threatened to blow the Danes away. But Kasper Hjulmand's obdurate and well-organised side weathered the storm and eventually carved out a few opportunities of their own, the best falling to striker Rasmus Hojlund, who twice was denied by smart saves by Manuel Neuer. The outcome of the game effectively hinged on a 16-second sequence of two VAR calls early in the second half: a Joachim Andersen goal negated after Thomas Delaney was ruled to be inches offside in the build-up and Germany's penalty award moments later.

"He [Raum] is a half-metre away from me and hits the ball on my hand. I can't see what I could do to prevent it"
Denmark's Joachim Andersen

MATTER OF FACT

Kai Havertz's penalty was Germany's first goal in a knockout-round game at a major international tournament since Mesut Ozil's quarter-final strike against Italy at Euro 2016.



SUNDAY JUNE 30, 5PM

ENGLAND (0) 2
(Bellingham 90+5, Kane 91)

SLOVAKIA (1) 1
(Schranz 25)

After Extra-Time; 1-1 at 90 mins

Arena AufSchalke, Gelsenkirchen. Att: 47,244 Ref: Umut Meler (Tur)

Bicycle kick... Jude Bellingham's last-gasp equaliser

ENGLAND Pickford – Walker, Stones, Guehi, Trippier (Palmer 66); Mainoo (Eze 84), Rice; Saka, Bellingham (Konsa 106), Foden (Toney 90+4); Kane (Gallagher 106)
■ Guehi, Mainoo, Bellingham

SLOVAKIA Dubravka – Pekarik (Tupta 109), Vavro, Skriniar, Hancko; Kucka (Bero 81), Lobotka, Duda (Benes 81); Schranz (Gyomber 90+3), Strelec (Bozenik 61) Haraslin (Suslov 61)
■ Kucka, Skriniar, Pekarik, Vavro, Gyomber, Suslov

GOALS

0-1 Juraj Kucka flicks on a header to David Strelec, who plays in Ivan Schranz to prod the ball home.

1-1 A long Kyle Walker throw-in is flicked on by Marc Guehi, and Jude Bellingham executes the perfect bicycle-kick finish.

2-1 Ivan Toney heads a mishit Eberechi Eze across the six-yard box, and Harry Kane does the rest.

BELLINGHAM BICYCLE KICK RESCUES SORRY ENGLAND

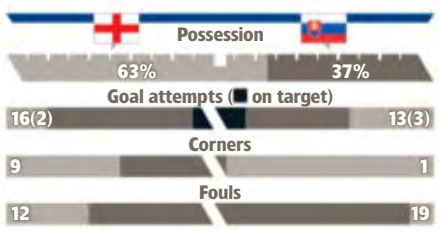
Not for the first time in his international career, England boy wonder Jude Bellingham came to the rescue of the Three Lions, who for much of the game had looked on the highway to hell. Deep into stoppage-time, a number of England supporters had already headed for the exits, convinced that the lifeboats would not arrive, but Bellingham had other ideas.

Thanks to his brilliant overhead kick, the tie was turned on its head, England going on to seal qualification in the first minute of the additional 30. A win is a win, yet no one will claim that this was anything but a woeful England performance, unusually shaky at the back, unimaginative in possession and limp in attack. Hard not to feel sorry for the resourceful Slovaks, who cut England open with remarkable ease in the first half and continued pressing high to the bitter end, with left-winger Lukas Haraslin in particular impressing.

"We showed the character which England have missed in times before"
England's Jude Bellingham

MATTER OF FACT

Kobbie Mainoo (19 years and 72 days) became the third-youngest player to start for England in a major tournament knockout game, after Michael Owen at France '98 and Wayne Rooney at Euro 2004.

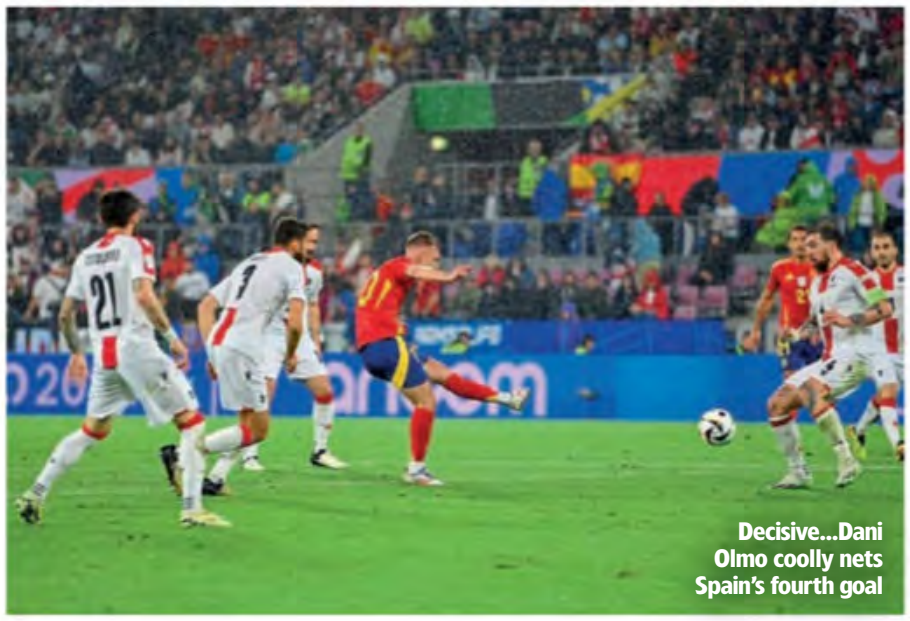


SUNDAY JUNE 30, 8PM

SPAIN (1) 4
(Rodri 39, Fabian 51, Williams 75, Olmo 83)

GEORGIA (1) 1
(Le Normand 18 og)

RheinEnergieStadion, Cologne. Att: 42,233 Ref: Letexier (Fra)



Decisive...Dani Olmo coolly nets Spain's fourth goal

SPAIN Simon – Carvajal (Navas 81), Le Normand, Laporte, Cucurella (Grimaldo 66); Pedri (Olmo 52), Rodri, Fabian (Merino 81); Yamal, Morata (Oyarzabal 66), Williams
■ Morata

GEORGIA Mamardashvili – Kakabadze, Gvelesiani (Kvekveskiri 79), Kashia, Dvali, Lochoshvili (Tsitaishvili 63); Chakvetadze (Davitashvili 63), Kiteishvili (Altunashvili 41) Kochorashvili; Mikautadze (Zivzivadze 79), Kvaratskhelia
■ Davitashvili

GOALS

0-1 An Otar Kakabadze right-wing cross is turned into his own net by Robin Le Normand.

1-1 Nico Williams sets up Rodri, who rifles it home from 18 yards.

2-1 A teasing right-wing Lamine Yamal cross is headed in at the far post by Fabian Ruiz.

3-1 In a thrilling counter, Williams latches onto a long ball, sidesteps an opponent and blasts home.

4-1 Dani Olmo picks his spot from the edge of the box.

RUTHLESS SPAIN CRUSH GEORGIA'S DREAMS

Excellently set up by their French head coach Willy Sagnol, Georgia's European Championship fairy tale came to a logical conclusion against an outstanding Spain side. But at least the Georgians went out with their heads held high, earning brownie points aplenty from their first-ever taste of the continental finals. At times, the possession stats hovered around the 90 per cent mark for Spain, but the Georgians were never going to cave in. Well-organised defensively and lightning quick when Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and others countered, they even had the audacity to open the scoring early on. The Spaniards, though, never panicked and simply had too much attacking weaponry for the Georgians to handle. The poise and control of Rodri, Pedri and Fabian Ruiz allied to the wiles and speed of young wingers Lamine Yamal and Nico Williams makes for nuclear fusion.

"It was deceptive because it could have been 8-1 or 9-1"
Spain boss Luis de la Fuente

MATTER OF FACT

Nico Williams became the only starting player to score, make an assist and complete 100 per cent of his passes in a single game at the Euros since 1980.

ROUND OF 16

MONDAY JULY 1, 5PM

FRANCE (0) 1
(Vertonghen 85 og)

BELGIUM (0) 0

Merkur Spiel-Arena, Dusseldorf. Att: 46,810 Ref: Nyberg (Swe)

Own goal...Antoine Griezmann celebrates seeing the ball hit the back of the net

FRANCE Maignan – Kounde, Upamecano, Saliba, Hernandez; Kante, Tchouameni, Rabiot; Griezmann, Thuram (Kolo Muani 62), Mbappe
Tchouameni, Griezmann, Rabiot

BELGIUM Casteels – Castagne (De Ketelaere 88), Faes, Vertonghen, Theate; Carrasco (Lukebakio 88), Onana, De Bruyne, Doku; Lukaku, Openda (Mangala 63)
Vertonghen, Mangala

GOALS

1-0 France methodically work the ball into the Belgian box. A shot by substitute Randal Kolo Muani takes a wicked deflection off Belgium centre-back Jan Vertonghen, totally wrong-footing goalkeeper Koen Casteels.

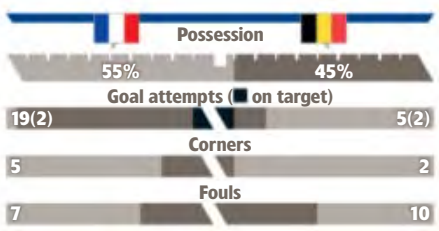
MESSY WINNER, MESSY MATCH

With a substantial amount of talent on the pitch, this heavyweight clash between two of the continent's most highly-ranked nations should have provided more than enough entertainment to keep an audience interested. Instead, the game rarely rose above the sterile, with both teams apparently content to stay unambitiously in their respective comfort zones. In a drab first half, the closest either side came to a goal was when France goalkeeper Mike Maignan unorthodoxly saved a Kevin De Bruyne free-kick with his feet. Until Belgium head coach Domenico Tedesco moved star midfielder De Bruyne further forward late in the game, the *Diables Rouges* stuck religiously to their safety-first game plan, while for all of France's territorial ascendancy, they had next to no cutting edge. Clearly uncomfortable wearing a face mask following his broken nose, France attacking ace Kylian Mbappe was, to put it mildly, not at his sharpest and it says it all that of *Les Bleus'* 19 shots on the day, only two were on target. Not that the Belgians were any more productive going forward: striker Romelu Lukaku was far too isolated and De Bruyne will feel he spurned a golden opportunity on 80 minutes, breaking free through the middle, only to see his shot saved comfortably by Maignan.

"It's a pity to concede a goal like that, but it's football"
Belgium skipper Kevin De Bruyne

MATTER OF FACT

Belgium have faced France five times in major tournaments and have lost every single one.



MONDAY JULY 1, 8PM

PORTUGAL (0) 0

SLOVENIA (0) 0

After Extra-Time; 0-0 at 90 mins; Portugal win 3-0 on penalties
Waldstadion, Frankfurt. Att: 46,576 Ref: Orsato (Ita)

Shootout hero ...Diogo Costa

PORTUGAL Costa – Cancelo (Semedo 117), Dias, Pepe (R. Neves 117), Mendes; Vitinha (Jota 65), Palhinha; B. Silva, Fernandes, Leao (Conceicao 76); Ronaldo
Cancelo

SLOVENIA Oblak – Karnicnik, Drkusic, Bijol, Balkovec; Stojanovic (Verbic 87), Gnezda Cerin, Elsnik (Ilicic 106), Mlakar (Gorenc Stankovic 74); Sporar (Celar 74), Sesko
Drkusic, Karnicnik, Celar, Bijol, Balkovec

PENALTIES (Slovenia first)

Ronaldo	1-0	0-0	Ilicic (saved)
Fernandes	2-0	1-0	Balkovec (saved)
B. Silva	3-0	2-0	Verbic (saved)

PORTUGAL SURVIVE SCARE

In a game of relatively little stylish quality but oodles of drama, Portugal had Porto keeper Diogo Costa to thank for their ticket to the quarter-finals. Not only did the 24-year-old stop all three of Slovenia's kicks in the shootout – a European Championship first – the young custodian also made a vital stop five minutes from the end of extra-time, blocking a Benjamin Sesko effort with an outstretched left leg. Sesko, left free to run in on goal after veteran Portugal defender Pepe lost his footing, had a night to forget in the one-on-one stakes, through with only Costa to beat on the hour-mark but horribly miscuing a shot wide. Portugal talisman Ronaldo, up against a gritty and well-drilled Slovenian backline, was the centre of attention as always, though at times seemed to be more interested in opening his Euro 2024 goalscoring account than contributing to the collective good. Keen to take every free-kick and increasingly frustrated with his lack of end-product, he then missed a penalty in extra-time, as Slovenia keeper Jan Oblak dived full length to palm the ball around the post. As the team's changed ends in extra-time, Ronaldo burst into tears. But like a true champion, he did not shirk his shootout duties, emphatically converting Portugal's first attempt and setting the tone for the rest of the shootout.

"Sadness at the beginning, then joy at the end. That's what football gives you"
Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo

MATTER OF FACT

Ronaldo, spot-kicks and Frankfurt share common ground. He scored one for Portugal there in a 2-0 win over Iran at the 2006 World Cup.

TUESDAY JULY 2, 5PM

ROMANIA (0) 0

NETHERLANDS (1) 3
(Gakpo 20, Malen 83, 90+3)

Allianz Arena, Munich. Att: 65,012 Ref: Zwayer (Ger)

Irrepressible... Cody Gakpo scores Netherlands' opener

ROMANIA Nita – Ratiu, Dragusin, Burca, Mogos (Racovitan 38); M. Marin (Cicaldau 72); Man, R. Marin, Stanciu (Olaru 88), Hagi (Alibec 72); Dragus (Mihaila 72)
■ M. Marin, Stanciu

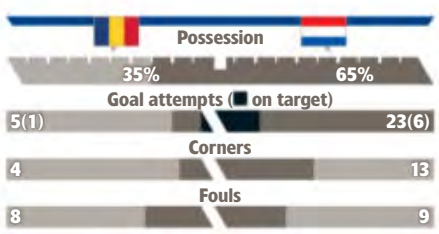
NETHERLANDS Verbruggen – Dumfries, De Vrij, Van Dijk, Ake (Van de Ven 69); Schouten (Veerman 69), Reijnders; Bergwijn (Malen 46), Simons, Gakpo (Weghorst 84); Depay (Blind 90+2)
■ Dumfries, Malen

GOALS
0-1 Xavi Simons picks out Cody Gakpo on the left flank, and the winger cuts inside and powers a shot inside Florin Nita's near post.
0-2 Gakpo infiltrates along the byline, outfoxes Romania stopper Radu Dragusin and pulls the ball back for Donyell Malen to prod in.
0-3 Malen breaks at speed down the left flank, moves inside, squeezes between two defenders and fires in.

DUTCH RUN ROMANIA RAGGED
Netherlands boss Ronald Koeman was proved correct when he said in a pre-match briefing that there was no need to panic in the wake of his team's poor performance in their final group game (a 3-2 loss to Austria). As if a switch had been flicked, the Dutch were a team transformed against surprise packages Romania, outclassing their opponents with a near-flawless display of high octane attacking football. Romania, as committed and fearless as they had been in the opening phase of the tournament, had Koeman's side on the back foot for the first 20 minutes. But as soon as Cody Gakpo gave the Dutch the lead, the whole dynamic of the game changed with the likes of Gakpo, Xavi Simons and Denzel Dumfries running riot. Simons was particularly impressive, excellent in locating pockets of space between the lines. If only Koeman's charges had not been so profligate in front of goal – they should have had the game wrapped up long before half-time substitute Donyell Malen netted a late brace.

"Cody [Gakpo] has been our most important player up to now. I hope the others reach his standard"
Netherlands boss Ronald Koeman

MATTER OF FACT
All 12 of Gakpo's international goals thus far for the *Oranje* have come in competitive matches.



TUESDAY JULY 2, 8PM

AUSTRIA (0) 1
(Gregoritsch 66)

TURKEY (1) 2
(Demiral 1, 59)

RB Arena, Leipzig. Att: 38,305 Ref: Soares Dias (Por)

Match-winner...Demiral scores Turkey's second

AUSTRIA Pentz – Posch, Danso, Lienhart (Wober 64) Mwene (Prass 46); Seiwald, Laimer (Grillitsch 64); Schmid (Gregoritsch 46), Baumgartner, Sabitzer; Arnautovic
■ Schmid, Lienhart

TURKEY Gunok – Ayhan, Demiral, Bardakci; Muldur, Yuksek (Ozcan 58), Kokcu (Kahveci 83), Kadioglu; Yilmaz, Guler (Yokuslu 78), Yildiz (Akturkoglu 78)
■ Kokcu, Yuksek

GOALS
0-1 An Arda Guler corner results in a spot of Austrian pinball. Merih Demiral pounces to lash home.
0-2 Guler clips a corner to the near post, where Demiral rises majestically to glance in.
1-2 Marcel Sabitzer's corner is flicked on by Stefan Posch, and Michael Gregoritsch side-foots in at the far stick.

DEMIRAL BRACE ENDS AUSTRIA'S EUROS
In marked contrast to the diet of pedestrian sideways football which many of the bigger nations had served up, here was the antidote everyone was craving: an end-to-end classic full of thrills and spills, with the intensity and high tempo reflecting the passion and noise generated by both sets of fans. The Turkish outsiders, brave, resilient and boasting the outrageously talented Real Madrid playmaker Arda Guler, eventually scooped the qualification spoils, reaching only their third Euros quarter-final (after 2000 and 2008). But Austria deserve the utmost credit too. After failing to record a single shot on target in the opening 45 minutes, Ralf Rangnick's side came storming back after the interval, piling on the pressure and keeping Turkey pinned back. Gregoritsch's goal midway through the half gave them real hope of restoring parity. However, Turkey simply would not yield, with goalkeeper Mert Gunok exemplifying their determined resistance. His heroics in stoppage time, somehow keeping out a Christoph Baumgartner header at the death, will forever be part of Turkish football folklore.

"We suffered for 90 minutes, but we deserved it"
Turkey's match-winner Merih Demiral

MATTER OF FACT
At 57 seconds, Demiral's opener is the quickest knockout-stage goal in European Championship history.

GROUP A

FRIDAY JUNE 14, 8PM

GERMANY (3) 5
(Wirtz 10, Musiala 19, Havertz 45+1 pen, Fullkrug 68, Can 90+3)

SCOTLAND (0) 1
(Rudiger 87 og)

Allianz Arena, Munich
Att: 65,052 Ref: Turpin (Fra)

GERMANY Neuer – Kimmich, Rudiger, Tah, Mittelstadt; Andrich (Gross 46), Kroos (Can 80); Musiala (Muller 74), Gundogan, Wirtz (Sane 63); Havertz (Fullkrug 63)
Andrich, Tah

SCOTLAND Gunn – Ralston, Porteous, Hendry, Tierney (McKenna 77), Robertson; McGinn (McLean 67), McTominay, McGregor (Gilmour 67), Christie (Shankland 82); Adams (Hanley 46)
Ralston, Porteous

GOALS

1-0 Florian Wirtz shoots low and hard from the edge of the box. Scotland keeper Angus Gunn gets a hand to it but cannot keep it out.
2-0 Ilkay Gundogan releases Kai Havertz, who squares the ball inside to Jamal Musiala. Cue a shimmy and screamer into the roof of the net.
3-0 Gundogan is poleaxed by a studs-up challenge from Ryan Porteous. Red card and penalty after a VAR check, which Havertz nets.
4-0 Niclas Fullkrug lashes in a thunderbolt.
4-1 A Scott McKenna header is diverted past his own keeper by a luckless Antonio Rudiger.
5-1 Substitute Emre Can cutely picks his spot in the bottom corner with a side-footed effort.

Explosive finish ...Jamal Musiala

SCOTLAND BLOWN AWAY BY HOSTS

After losing their last three opening matches at major tournaments, Germany made no mistake this time around, tearing apart an out-of-sorts Scotland with a masterclass of control and attacking fluidity. Scotland, a man short for 45 minutes, were outclassed; poor in possession, sloppy defensively and non-existent in their pressing game. German midfield regulator Toni Kroos, left to his own devices, had a field day.

	Germany	Scotland
Possession	73%	27%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	20(10)	1(0)
Corners	5	0
Fouls	15	9

SATURDAY JUNE 15, 2PM

HUNGARY (0) 1
(Varga 66)

SWITZERLAND (2) 3
(Duah 12, Aebischer 45, Embolo 90+3)

RheinEnergieStadion, Cologne
Att: 41,676 Ref: Vincic (Svn)

HUNGARY Gulacsi – Lang (Bolla 46), Orban, Szalai (Dardai 79); Fiola, A. Nagy (Kleinheisler 67), Schafer, Kerkez (Adam 79); Sallai, Szoboszlai; Varga
Szalai, Bolla

SWITZERLAND Sommer – Schar, Akanji, Rodriguez; Widmer (Stergiou 68), Freuler (Sierro 86), Xhaka, Aebischer; Ndoye (Rieder 86), Vargas (Embolo 74); Duah (Amdouni 68)
Widmer, Freuler

GOALS

0-1 Narrowly beating the Hungarian offside trap – after a VAR review – Kwadwo Duah scampers onto a sublime Michel Aebischer through ball and finishes with aplomb.
0-2 From the edge of the D, Aebischer whips a right-footed curler into the bottom corner.
1-2 Barnabas Varga stoops low to head in an inch-perfect Dominik Szoboszlai cross.
1-3 A long clearance from Swiss keeper Yann Sommer sparks opposition panic. Sub Breel Embolo chests the ball down and lobs it home.

Points sealed... Breel Embolo

YAKIN OUTFOXES HUNGARIANS

Full marks to much-maligned Switzerland boss Murat Yakin for his surprise decision to start wing-back Michel Aebischer and striker Kwadwo Duah. Aebischer, constantly coming inside, was influential throughout, making one goal and netting another, while Duah, in only his second appearance for the *Nati*, opened the scoring. For two thirds of the encounter, the Swiss were in total control, lively, collectively strong and boasting a brilliant midfield general in Granit Xhaka. Only in the final half-hour did the Hungarians wake up. Too little, too late.

	Hungary	Switzerland
Possession	50%	50%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	6(2)	15(7)
Corners	2	6
Fouls	9	13

WEDNESDAY JUNE 19, 5PM

GERMANY (1) 2
(Musiala 22, Gundogan 67)

HUNGARY (0) 0

MHPArena, Stuttgart
Att: 54,000 Ref: Makkelie (Ned)

GERMANY Neuer – Kimmich, Rudiger, Tah, Mittelstadt; Andrich (Can 71), Kroos; Musiala (Fuhrich 72), Gundogan (Undav 84), Wirtz (Sane 58); Havertz (Fullkrug 58)
Rudiger, Mittelstadt

HUNGARY Gulacsi – Fiola, Orban, Dardai; Bolla (Adam 75), A. Nagy (Kleinheisler 64), Schafer, Kerkez (Z. Nagy 75); Sallai (Csoboth 87), Szoboszlai; Varga (Gazdag 87)
Varga, Szoboszlai

GOALS

1-0 While attempting to mop up a German attack, Hungary defender Willi Orban stumbles, handing possession to Ilkay Gundogan, who tees up Jamal Musiala to explosively finish.
2-0 After a slick short passing sequence, Maximilian Mittelstadt's pull-back from the left is swept home by Germany captain Gundogan.

Captain's contribution ...Ilkay Gundogan

HOSTS SWAT HUNGARY ASIDE

As valiantly as the Hungarians played, this was, nevertheless, a cruise-control victory for Julian Nagelsmann's side, the first nation to book their place in the knockout phase. On the eve of this encounter, former national team captain Michael Ballack confidently asserted that he had yet to see a better team than Germany at Euro 2024 and, on the basis of their confidence on the ball and impressive frontline movement, he had a point. At least Hungary, far more enterprising than in their loss to Switzerland four days earlier, went down fighting, defending resolutely and threatening on occasion through Dominik Szoboszlai, Roland Sallai – who had a goal ruled out for offside – and Barnabas Varga, who wastefully headed over on the hour.

	Germany	Hungary
Possession	70%	30%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	19(7)	11(4)
Corners	11	7
Fouls	12	10

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
GERMANY	3	2	1	0	8	2	7
SWITZERLAND	3	1	2	0	5	3	5
HUNGARY	3	1	0	2	2	5	3
SCOTLAND	3	0	1	2	2	7	1

WEDNESDAY JUNE 19, 8PM

SCOTLAND (1) 1
(McTominay 13)

SWITZERLAND (1) 1
(Shaqiri 26)

RheinEnergieStadion, Cologne
Att: 42,711 Ref: Kruzliak (Svk)

SCOTLAND Gunn – Hendry, Hanley, Tierney (McKenna 61); Ralston, Gilmour (McLean 79), McGregor, Robertson; McTominay; Adams (Shankland 90+1), McGinn (Christie 90)
McTominay, McKenna, McGinn

SWITZERLAND Sommer – Schar, Akanji, Rodriguez; Widmer (Stergiou 86), Freuler (Sierro 75), Xhaka, Aebischer; Shaqiri (Embolo 60); Ndoye (Amdouni 86), Vargas (Rieder 75)
Rodriguez, Sierro

GOALS

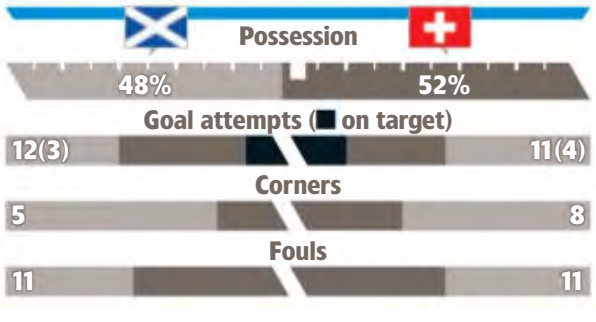
1-0 Andy Robertson leads the counter-attack down the left. He slips in Callum McGregor, who cuts the ball back for Scott McTominay. The latter's goal-bound shot takes a big deflection off Switzerland centre-back Fabian Schar.

1-1 Anthony Ralston plays a terrible back-pass. Xherdan Shaqiri latches onto it and bends a brilliant effort into the top corner from 20 yards.

Wonder strike... Shaqiri watch his shot curl in

SHAQIRI MAGIC LIGHTS UP COLOGNE

In a hard-fought, often frenetic encounter, both sides would have been satisfied with a share of the spoils: Switzerland for virtually sealing their qualification for the last 16, Scotland delighted to still be standing and to have vigorously bounced back following a soporific display against the Germans. While the white-hot pace of the first half subsided after the interval, there was no shortage of near-misses. Scotland keeper Angus Gunn denied onrushing Swiss danger man Dan Ndoye, Scotland centre-back Grant Hanley nodded a free-kick against the woodwork and, in a thrill-laden finale, Swiss sub Zeki Amdouni flashed a header wide and team-mate Manuel Akanji turned lifesaver with a timely clearance.



SUNDAY JUNE 23, 8PM

SWITZERLAND (1) 1
(Ndoye 28)

GERMANY (0) 1
(Fullkrug 90+2)

Waldstadion, Frankfurt
Att: 46,685 Ref: Orsato (Ita)

SWITZERLAND Sommer – Schar, Akanji, Rodriguez; Widmer, Freuler, Xhaka, Aebischer; Rieder (Vargas 65), Ndoye (Amdouni 65); Embolo (Duah 65)
Ndoye, Xhaka, Widmer

GERMANY Neuer – Kimmich, Rudiger, Tah (Schlotterbeck 61), Mittelstadt (Raum 61); Andrich (Beier 65), Kroos; Musiala (Fullkrug 76), Gundogan, Wirtz (Sane 76); Havertz
Tah

GOALS

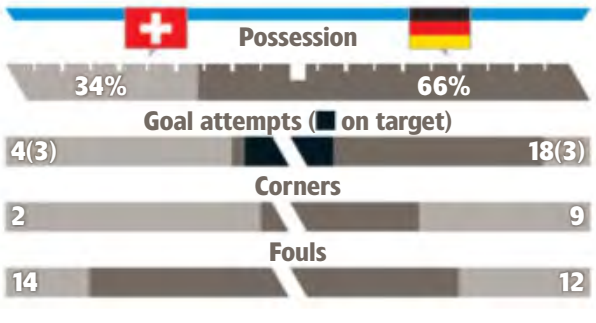
1-0 Remo Freuler, out on the left, crosses to the near-post where Dan Ndoye stretches to finish.

1-1 David Raum's perfect centre finds Niclas Fullkrug, who guides his header back across the Swiss keeper and into the far corner.

Supersub... Fullkrug's late equaliser

SUBPERSUB SECURES TOP SPOT

A maxim for the ages: never write off the Germans. Just as they looked down and out, up popped supersub Niclas Fullkrug to head home a stoppage-time equaliser, a goal which ensured top spot in Group A for Julian Nagelsmann's never-say-die charges. Despite Germany thoroughly out-pointing their opponents in possession and shot data, this was anything but an international mismatch, with the Swiss producing one of their best displays in recent years; highly effective in their pressing game, lightning quick on the break and very strong mentally. Both sides had goals disallowed – Robert Andrich for a foul by Jamal Musiala in the build-up, and Ruben Vargas for offside – while Manuel Neuer's brilliant save from a long-range Granit Xhaka curler on 88 minutes proved to be the turning point of the match.



SUNDAY JUNE 23, 8PM

SCOTLAND (0) 0

HUNGARY (0) 1
(Csoboth 90+10)

MHPArena, Stuttgart
Att: 54,000 Ref: Tello (Arg)

SCOTLAND Gunn – Hendry, Hanley, McKenna; Ralston (McLean 83), Gilmour (Christie 83), McGregor, Robertson (Morgan 89); McGinn (Armstrong 76), McTominay; Adams (Shankland 76)
McTominay

HUNGARY Gulacsi – Botka, Orban, Dardai (Szalai 74); Bolla (Csoboth 86), Schafer, Styles (A. Nagy 61), Kerkez (Z. Nagy 86); Szoboszlai, Sallai; Varga (Adam 74)
Styles, Orban, Schafer, Kleinheisler, Csoboth

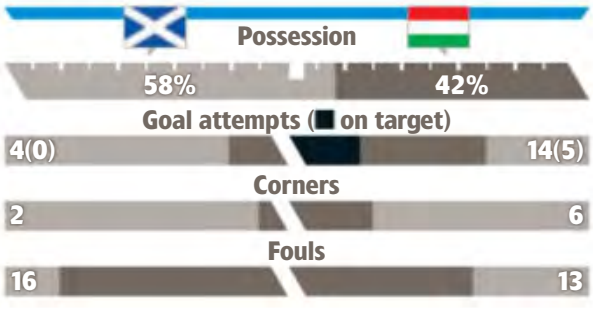
GOALS

0-1 In the final minute of time added on, Hungary launch a swift counter from their own box. Roland Sallai hits the byline on the right and cuts it back for Kevin Csoboth to score. Hungary's hopes of further progress remain alive.

Dejected...Scotland react to Hungary's late winner

FAMILIAR SCOTTISH HEARTBREAK

Up until the wild, end-to-end intensity of a prolonged period of stoppage time, the two sides, both inhibited and nervy, gave the impression of being on a mutually-assured mission of self-destruction, seemingly sleep-walking to the draw which was of no use to either. The Magyars appeared happy to play an ultra-patient waiting game, while for all Scotland's dominance in possession they did very little with it, taking 53 minutes to have their first shot and showing next to no cutting edge. In mitigation, the Scots were denied a clear penalty late on when Stuart Armstrong was sent flying in the box by Willi Orban. Play was held up for seven minutes in the second half after Hungary striker Barnabas Varga collided violently with Scotland keeper Angus Gunn, leaving the former with a fractured cheekbone and concussion.



GROUP B

SATURDAY JUNE 15, 5PM

SPAIN (3) 3
(Morata 29, Fabian 32, Carvajal 45+2)

CROATIA (0) 0

Olympiastadion, Berlin
Att: 68,844 Ref: Oliver (Eng)

SPAIN Simon – Carvajal, Le Normand, Nacho, Cucurella; Pedri (Olmo 59), Rodri (Zubimendi 86), Fabian; Yamal (Torres 86), Morata (Oyarzabal 67), Williams (Merino 68)
Rodri

CROATIA Livakovic – Stanisic, Sutalo, Pongracic, Gvardiol; Brozovic; Majer, Modric (Mario Pasalic 65), Kovacic (Sucic 65), Kramaric (Petkovic 72); Budimir (Perisic 56)

GOALS

1-0 Fabian Ruiz plays a defence-splitting through ball, which Spain skipper Alvaro Morata runs on to and finishes coolly with his left foot.
2-0 Fabian Ruiz jinks past two defenders on the edge of the penalty box, before hitting a low shot into the bottom corner.
3-0 Dani Carvajal ghosts in behind the Croatia backline and stabs in a volley from close range following a right-wing cross by Lamine Yamal.

Converted... Dani Carvajal scores from Yamal's cross

SPAIN START STRONGLY

Three first-half goals saw Spain take total control against a Croatia side who threatened at times but lacked any real punch. Alvaro Morata's calm finish from a terrific Fabian Ruiz pass opened the scoring, before Fabian scored himself after some neat footwork. Lamine Yamal then provided an inch-perfect cross for Dani Carvajal to score his first Spain goal. Croatia's day got worse after Bruno Petkovic's goal – a follow-up from his missed penalty – was ruled out for encroachment.

MATTER OF FACT

Lamine Yamal became the youngest player in men's Euros history aged 16 years and 338 days.

SATURDAY JUNE 15, 8PM

ITALY (2) 2
(Bastoni 11, Barella 16)

ALBANIA (1) 1
(Bajrami 1)

Westfalenstadion, Dortmund
Att: 60,512 Ref: Zwayer (Ger)

ITALY Donnarumma – Di Lorenzo, Bastoni, Calafiori, Dimarco (Darmian 83); Jorginho; Chiesa (Cambiaso 77), Frattesi, Barella (Folorunsho 90+2), Pellegrini (Cristante 77); Scamacca (Retegui 83)
Pellegrini, Calafiori

ALBANIA Strakosha – Hysaj, Ajeti, Djimsiti, Mitaj; Asani (Hoxha 68), Ramadani, Asllani, Seferi (Laci 68); Bajrami (Muci 87); Broja (Manaj 77)
Broja, Hoxha

GOALS

0-1 Nedim Bajrami pounces on a miscalculated Federico Dimarco throw-in and thrashes a strike into the top corner at the near post.
1-1 Alessandro Bastoni heads home Lorenzo Pellegrini's delivery at the far post after a clever short corner routine with Dimarco.
2-1 Nicolo Barella thumps in a first-time effort on the half-volley from just outside the area.

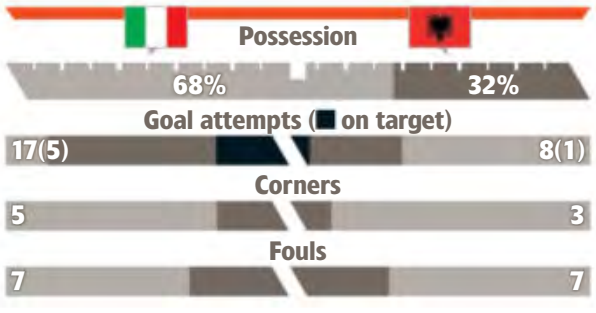
Stunner ...Bajrami opens the scoring

ITALY AVOID MAJOR UPSET

Nedim Bajrami took advantage of a sloppy Italian throw-in to send Albania's supporters into raptures, but their jubilation didn't last long. Ten minutes later, Alessandro Bastoni sent a header past Thomas Strakosha to level the score, before Nicolo Barella's fine first-time finish competed the turnaround. From there on, the holders dominated possession but were unable to extend their advantage, with keeper Strakosha making a few fine saves to keep his country in the game, although to no avail.

MATTER OF FACT

Bajrami's early strike after 23 seconds was the fastest goal in European Championship history.



WEDNESDAY JUNE 19, 2PM

CROATIA (0) 2
(Kramaric 74, Gjasula 76 og)

ALBANIA (1) 2
(Laci 11, Gjasula 90+5)

Volksparkstadion, Hamburg
Att: 46,784 Ref: Letexier (Fra)

CROATIA Livakovic – Juranovic, Sutalo, Gvardiol, Perisic (Sosa 84); Modric, Brozovic (Mario Pasalic 46), Kovacic; Majer (Sucic, 46), Petkovic (Budimir 69), Kramaric (Baturina 84)
Ivusic

ALBANIA Strakosha – Hysaj, Ajeti, Djimsiti, Mitaj; Ramadani (Hoxha 85), Asllani; Asani (Seferi 64), Laci (Gjasula 73), Bajrami; Manaj (Daku 85)
Hysaj, Daku, Gjasula

GOALS

0-1 Jasir Asani whips in a left-footed cross from the right wing, and with the first attempt of the match Qazim Laci heads into the net.
1-1 A neat finish from inside the box by Andrej Kramaric finds the bottom corner and levels it up.
2-1 Luka Sucic's six-yard effort pinballs off two Albania players and deflects into the net.
2-2 Klaus Gjasula this time scores at the right end, stroking the ball past goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic from 12 yards in the dying moments.

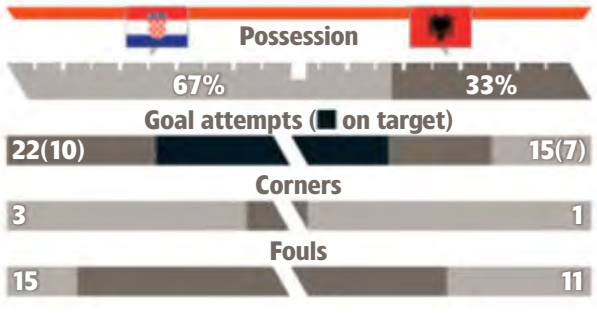
Zero to hero... Klaus Gjasula

ALBANIA GRAB DRAMATIC DRAW

Just like they did against Italy in their opening game Albania got themselves an early lead, but this time Sylvinho's side managed to hold on to it for longer. Qazim Laci's near-post header sent the Albania fans wild, but they suffered a sense of deja-vu after Croatia turned the game on its head with two goals in two second-half minutes. A chaotic end to the match climaxed with Klaus Gjasula's stoppage-time equaliser.

MATTER OF FACT

Gjasula became the first sub in Euros history to score and net an own goal in the same game.



GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SPAIN	3	3	0	0	5	0	9
ITALY	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
CROATIA	3	0	2	1	3	6	2
ALBANIA	3	0	1	2	3	5	1

THURSDAY JUNE 20, 8PM

SPAIN (0) 1
(Calafiori 55 og)

ITALY (0) 0

Arena AufSchalke, Gelsenkirchen
Att: 49,528 Ref: Vincic (Svn)

SPAIN Simon – Carvajal, Le Normand, Laporte, Cucurella; Pedri (Baena 74), Rodri, Fabian (Merino 90+4); Lamal (Torres 71), Morata (Oyarzabal 78), Williams (Perez 78)
Rodri, Le Normand, Carvajal

ITALY Donnarumma – Di Lorenzo, Bastoni, Calafiori, Dimarco; Jorginho (Cristante 46), Barella; Chiesa (Zaccagni 64), Frattesi (Cambiaso 46), Pellegrini (Raspadori 82); Scamacca (Retegui 64)
Donnarumma, Cristante

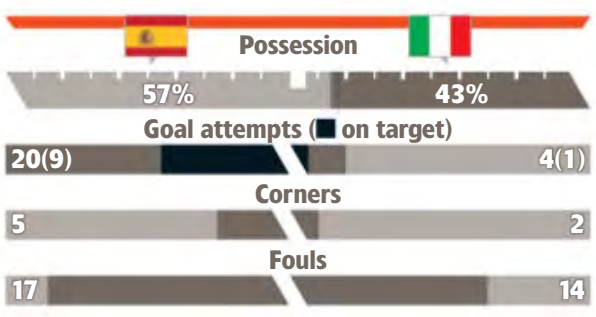
GOALS

1-0 Alvaro Morata's flick-on from Nico Williams' cross is parried by Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma, and deflects off the knee of the unfortunate Riccardo Calafiori into his own net.

Own goal... Spain players celebrate the only goal

LA ROJA PROGRESS TO KNOCKOUTS

A dominant Spanish performance against a totally toothless Italy saw *La Roja* progress to the last 16, although with more clinical finishing and a bit of extra luck the game needn't have been so tight. Luis de la Fuente's side peppered Gianluigi Donnarumma's goal in the first half with Pedri, Fabian Ruiz and Alvaro Morata all having shots saved by the goalkeeper. Nico Williams, brilliant on the night, should have scored when he headed wide but made amends in the second half. After some neat wing play, it was his cross, flicked on by Morata, which Riccardo Calafiori sent into his own net. The Athletic Club star later hit the crossbar with a fine long-range effort, Lamine Yamal came close from distance and sub Ayoze Perez saw two late shots saved, but one goal was ultimately enough to book Spain's spot in the last 16.



MONDAY JUNE 24, 8PM

ALBANIA (0) 0

SPAIN (1) 1
(Torres 13)

Merkur Spiel-Arena, Dusseldorf
Att: 46,586 Ref: Nyberg (Swe)

ALBANIA Strakosha – Balliu, Ajeti, Djimsiti, Mitaj; Ramadani, Asllani; Asani (Muci 81), Laci (M. Berisha 70), Bajrami (Hoxha 70); Manaj (Broja 59)
Bajrami, M. Berisha

SPAIN Raya – Navas, Vivian, Laporte (Le Normand 46), Grimaldo; Zubimendi, Merino; Torres (Yamal 72), Olmo (Baena 84), Oyarzabal (Fermin 62); Joselu (Morata 72)
Vivian

GOALS

0-1 Ferran Torres runs onto a Dani Olmo through pass and curls home a lovely low finish with his left foot, which goes in off the far post.

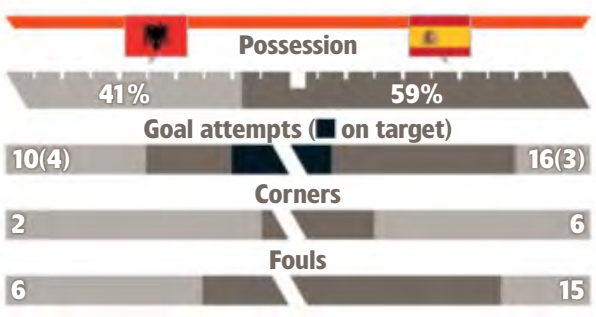
Slotted...Ferran Torres watch his goal go in

SPAIN SEAL PERFECT RECORD

With Group B's top spot already secured, Spain coach Luis de la Fuente was able to make ten changes to his starting line-up for the clash with Albania. After some early openings, the group leaders broke the deadlock within the first 15 minutes thanks to Ferran Torres' low first-time finish from Dani Olmo's precise through ball. Olmo, Torres, Joselu and Mikel Merino then all missed opportunities to kill the game off, while Spain goalkeeper David Raya was forced into a few good saves in the second half as Albania pressed for an equaliser that would have secured them third spot and a slim chance of qualifying for the knockout rounds.

MATTER OF FACT

Spain won their opening three group-stage matches at a European Championship for just the second time after 2008, when they went on to lift the trophy.



MONDAY JUNE 24, 8PM

CROATIA (0) 1
(Modric 55)

ITALY (0) 1
(Zaccagni 90+8)

Red Bull Arena, Leipzig
Att: 38,322 Ref: Makkelie (Ned)

CROATIA Livakovic – Stanisic, Sutalo, Pongracic, Gvardiol; Modric (Majer 81), Brozovic, Kovacic (Ivanusec 70); Sucic (Perisic 70), Kramaric (Juranovic 90), Mario Pasalic (Budimir 46)
Sucic, Modric, Ivanusec, Pongracic, Stanisic, Brozovic

ITALY Donnarumma – Darmian (Zaccagni 81), Bastoni, Calafiori; Jorginho (Fagioli 81); Di Lorenzo, Barella, Pellegrini (Frattesi 46), Dimarco (Chiesa 57); Raspadori (Scamacca 75), Retegui
Calafiori, Fagioli

GOALS

1-0 Luka Modric fires high into the net from close range shortly after seeing his penalty brilliantly saved by Gianluigi Donnarumma.
1-1 Sub Mattia Zaccagni scores a dramatic 98th-minute equaliser after a driving run and assist by the outstanding Riccardo Calafiori.

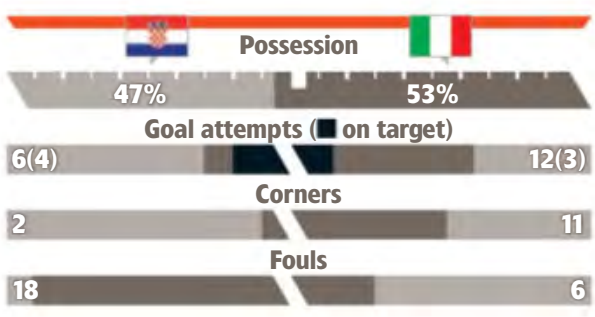
Late blow... Zaccagni's inch-perfect late finish

SUPERSUB ZACCAGNI RESCUES HOLDERS

After a tepid first half, where Italy chose to sit back and Croatia struggled to break them down, the second half provided some moments of real drama. The first, a Davide Frattesi handball in the box, saw Luka Modric have the chance to open the scoring from the spot, only to see his penalty saved by Gianluigi Donnarumma. The Croatia captain had the ball in the net 33 seconds later though, as he lifted it high into the roof of the goal after it found its way back to him following a short passage of play. The 2018 World Cup runners-up were seconds from a place in the last 16, before sub Mattia Zaccagni's debut Italy goal with a dramatic, delightful curling effort.

MATTER OF FACT

At 38 years and 289 days old, Luka Modric is the oldest player ever to score at the Euros.



GROUP C

SUNDAY JUNE 16, 5PM

SLOVENIA (0) 1
(Janza 77)

DENMARK (1) 1
(Eriksen 17)

MHPArena, Stuttgart
Att: 54,000 Ref: Scharer (Sui)

SLOVENIA Oblak – Karnicnik, Drkusic, Bijol, Janza; Stojanovic (Verbic 67), Gnezda Cerin, Elsnik (Gorenc Stankovic 75), Mlakar (Celar 75); Sporar (Brekalo 90+4), Sesko (Kurtic 90+4)
■ Stojanovic, Celar

DENMARK Schmeichel – Andersen, Christensen, Vestergaard; Bah, Hjulmand (Delaney 89), Hojbjerg (Norgaard 83), Kristiansen (Maehle 77); Eriksen; Wind (Dolberg 83), Hojlund (Poulsen 83)
■ Hjulmand

GOALS

0-1 Jonas Wind flicks on a quick throw-in for Christian Eriksen to chest down and shoot home the opening goal.

1-1 A Slovenia corner skids across the penalty box and Erik Janza's 20-yard shot is deflected into the goal off Morten Hjulmand.

Leveller... Erik Janza celebrates

WASTEFUL DENMARK

Denmark, thanks largely to the superb Christian Eriksen, had more than enough chances to have won their opening match decisively. They took an early lead through Eriksen and were particularly wasteful in the second half, notably when keeper Jan Oblak saved well from Rasmus Hojlund at close range. Slovenia issued enough warnings of the threat they offered. Petar Stojanovic headed just wide at the start of the second half and Benjamin Sesko struck a post before Erik Janza levelled.

MATTER OF FACT

Man of the match Christian Eriksen was returning to the Euro finals after his cardiac arrest on the pitch in Copenhagen in 2021.

	Slovenia	Denmark
Possession	32%	68%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	11(2)	16(4)
Corners	5	9
Fouls	12	9

SUNDAY JUNE 16, 8PM

SERBIA (0) 0

ENGLAND (1) 1
(Bellingham 13)

Arena AufSchalke, Gelsenkirchen
Att: 48,953 Ref: Orsato (Ita)

SERBIA Rajkovic – Veljkovic, Milenkovic, Pavlovic; Zivkovic (Birmancevic 74), Lukic (Jovic 61), Gudelj (Ilic 46), Kostic (Mladenovic 43); Vlahovic, S. Milinkovic-Savic; Mitrovic (Tadic 61)
■ Gudelj, Tadic

ENGLAND Pickford – Walker, Stones, Guehi, Trippier; Alexander-Arnold (Gallagher 69), Rice; Saka (Bowen 76), Bellingham (Mainoo 86), Foden; Kane

GOALS

0-1 Kyle Walker's superb pass inside the full-back is carried to the byline by Bukayo Sako, whose right-wing cross to the far post is dive-headed home by Jude Bellingham.

Headed home ...Bellingham celebrates scoring

ENGLAND OFF THE MARK

Gareth Southgate might have preferred less challenging opposition than Serbia for England's opening match. England, with Trent Alexander-Arnold partnering Declan Rice in midfield, took early command of possession and were rewarded with a fine goal from Jude Bellingham, which forced Serbia out of their initial caution. Aleksandar Mitrovic wasted one opening before the interval and Dusan Vlahovic forced a fine save from Jordan Pickford after the break. Harry Kane headed one of England's rare late chances against the bar. The physical commitment of subs Conor Gallagher and Jarrod Bowen helped England hold on to their lead.

MATTER OF FACT

Before kick-off, England lined up to God Save the King as their national anthem for the first time ever at the European Championship.

	Serbia	England
Possession	47%	53%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	6(1)	5(3)
Corners	2	1
Fouls	19	8

THURSDAY JUNE 20, 2PM

SLOVENIA (0) 1
(Karnicnik 69)

SERBIA (0) 1
(Jovic 90+5)

Allianz Arena, Munich
Att: 63,028 Ref: Kovacs (Rou)

SLOVENIA Oblak – Karnicnik, Drkusic, Bijol, Janza; Stojanovic (Verbic 76), Gnezda Cerin, Elsnik (Brekalo 90+1), Mlakar (Gorenc Stankovic 64); Sporar, Sesko (Vipotnik 76)
■ Janza, Vipotnik

SERBIA Rajkovic – Veljkovic, Milenkovic, Pavlovic; Zivkovic (Birmancevic 82), Ilic, Lukic (S. Milinkovic-Savic 64), Mladenovic (Gacinovic 46); Tadic (Samardzic 82); Vlahovic (Jovic 64), Mitrovic
■ Mladenovic, Lukic, Jovic, Gacinovic

GOALS

1-0 Zan Karnicnik wins possession deep in his own half, keeps on running and arrives at the far post to covert Timi Elsnik's left-wing cross.

1-1 Slovenia goalkeeper Jan Oblak remains on his goal line, which allows Luka Jovic to sneak in and head home a left-wing corner from Ivan Ilic.

Equaliser...Jovic scores for Serbia

JOVIC TO THE RESCUE

Luka Jovic's stoppage-time equaliser kept Serbia alive in the finals with their first point. Coach Dragan Stojkovic had criticised his side for showing England "too much respect" in their opener, but they were similarly slow off the mark in Munich as Slovenia almost took a first-half lead when Timi Elsnik struck the post. When Serbia did eventually spark into life, they were denied by the sharp saves of Slovenia goalkeeper Jan Oblak. Yet after Slovenia took the lead through right-back Zan Karnicnik, Serbia stepped up their attacking action, with Aleksandar Mitrovic hitting the bar. Jovic's goal not only kept them alive, but denied Slovenia what would have been only their second win at a major tournament since the first against Algeria at the 2010 World Cup.

	Slovenia	Serbia
Possession	39%	61%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	11(4)	15(4)
Corners	4	9
Fouls	13	8

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ENGLAND	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
DENMARK	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
SLOVENIA	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
SERBIA	3	0	2	1	1	2	2

THURSDAY JUNE 20, 5PM

DENMARK (1) 1
(Hjulmand 34)

ENGLAND (1) 1
(Kane 18)

Waldstadion, Frankfurt
Att: 46,177 Ref: Soares Dias (Por)

DENMARK Schmeichel – Andersen, Vestergaard, Christensen; Maehle, Hjulmand (Norgaard 82), Hojbjerg, Kristiansen (Bah 57); Wind (Damsgaard 57), Eriksen (Skov Olsen 82); Hojlund (Poulsen 57)
■ Vestergaard, Maehle, Norgaard

ENGLAND Pickford – Walker, Stones, Guehi, Trippier; Alexander-Arnold (Gallagher 54), Rice; Saka (Eze 69), Bellingham, Foden (Bowen 69); Kane (Watkins 70)
■ Gallagher

GOALS

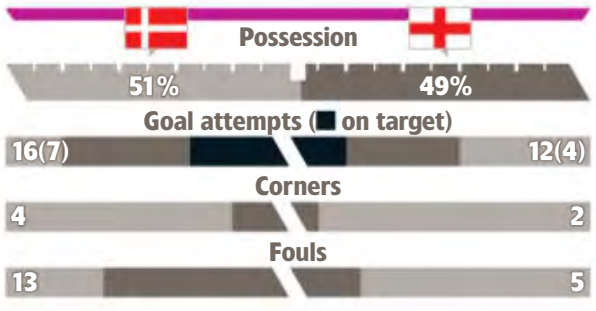
0-1 Victor Kristiansen is caught out by Kyle Walker, and his low cross, which deflects off Jannik Vestergaard and Andreas Christensen, falls into the path of Harry Kane to convert.

1-1 Kane concedes possession after a quick England throw-in from the left, allowing Morten Hjulmand to strike a superb 30-yard drive into the bottom corner beyond Jordan Pickford.

Drilled home... Hjulmand scores for Denmark

ENGLAND FADE-OUT

Denmark prepared perfectly to foil England and were not flustered by conceding an early goal to Harry Kane. They coped far better with a pitch that continually cut up, and deserved a fine equaliser from midfielder Morten Hjulmand. Phil Foden hit the post after the interval before being substituted, along with Kane and Bukayo Saka, by frustrated manager Gareth Southgate as he looked for runners in behind. The midfield experiment with Trent Alexander-Arnold failed once again. Denmark may feel they could have won all three points with a little more attacking courage. Southgate said: "We understand people will be disappointed with the performances. We're not using the ball well enough, we know there's another level we have to find."



TUESDAY JUNE 25, 8PM

ENGLAND (0) 0

SLOVENIA (0) 0

RheinEnergieStadion, Cologne
Att: 41,536 Ref: Turpin (Fra)

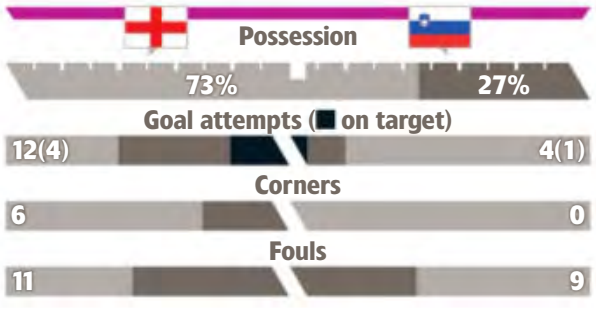
ENGLAND Pickford – Walker, Stones, Guehi, Trippier (Alexander-Arnold 84); Gallagher (Mainoo 46), Rice, Bellingham; Saka (Palmer 71), Foden (Gordon 89); Kane
■ Trippier, Guehi, Foden

SLOVENIA: Oblak – Karnicnik, Drkusic, Bijol, Janza (Balkovec 90+1); Stojanovic, Gnezda Cerin, Elsnik, Mlakar (Gorenc Stankovic 86); Sporar (Celar 86), Sesko (Ilicic 75)
■ Janza, Bijol

Stalemate...England failed to break down a resolute Slovenia

MIXED EMOTIONS

Both England and Slovenia qualified for the knockout stages, with the Three Lions top of Group C and Slovenia in third, but the final whistle from French referee Clement Turpin was greeted with contrasting emotions. Slovenia celebrated their first such qualification in a major tournament with sheer jubilation, while England, although satisfied with the qualification target achieved, were dissatisfied again with a display that provoked boos and the throwing of beer-filled paper cups in protest at another shot-shy performance. Conor Gallagher started in midfield after the failed experiment with Trent Alexander-Arnold, yet England needed more than half an hour before Harry Kane managed a first shot from open play. They were energised in the second half by recourse to substitutes Kobbie Mainoo and, later, Cole Palmer and Anthony Gordon, but still failed to cause any serious problems for Slovenia goalkeeper Jan Oblak. Gareth Southgate remained positive, saying afterwards: "However the fans feel towards me, I get it; I've been around England for 20 years. My job is to guide the team through this and keep the perspective for them."



TUESDAY JUNE 25, 8PM

DENMARK (0) 0

SERBIA (0) 0

Allianz Arena, Munich
Att: 64,288 Ref: Letexier (Fra)

DENMARK Schmeichel – Andersen, Vestergaard, Christensen; Bah (Kristiansen 77), Hjulmand (Delaney 77), Hojbjerg, Maehle; Eriksen (Poulsen 88), Wind (Skov Olsen 46); Hojlund (Dolberg 59)
■ Wind, Hjulmand

SERBIA Rajkovic – Veljkovic, Milenkovic, Pavlovic; Mijailovic (Mladenovic 73), Ilic (Vlahovic 67), Gudelj (Jovic 46), Zivkovic; Samardzic (Tadic 46), Lukic (S. Milinkovic-Savic 87); Mitrovic
■ Milenkovic, Mitrovic

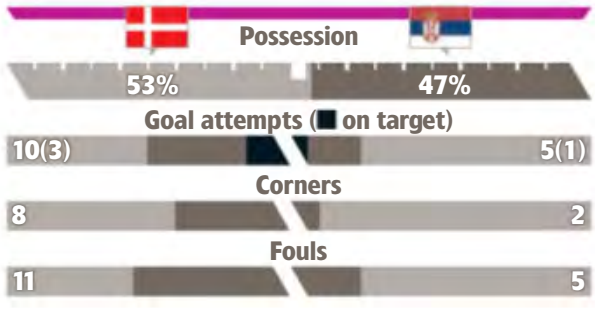
Feisty... Andersen and Mitrovic clash

UNINSPIRING END TO UNINSPIRING GROUP

This 0-0 draw ensured that the group was the joint-lowest scoring in Euros history. Denmark could have made life far easier for themselves had they beaten Serbia. Instead they had to rely on an obscure regulation to claim second place above Slovenia. The teams finished level on three points and goal difference, while the two teams had also played out a 1-1 draw. Here disciplinary records came into play. Both squads had incurred six yellow cards, but Slovenia were edged down into third because of a booking for their assistant coach Milivoje Novakovic. The closest Denmark came to a goal here, which could have saved all the frustration, was early in the first half when Predrag Rajkovic dived to his right to push away a Christian Eriksen shot. In a largely forgettable encounter, Jonas Wind also had a goal disallowed – as the ball had gone out of play beforehand from a corner – and Serbia had one chalked off for offside.

MATTER OF FACT

Christian Eriksen set a Denmark record with his 133rd cap because team-mate Simon Kjaer, who also started with 132, remained on the bench.



GROUP D

SUNDAY JUNE 16, 2PM

POLAND (1) 1
(Buksa 16)

NETHERLANDS (1) 2
(Gakpo 29, Weghorst 83)

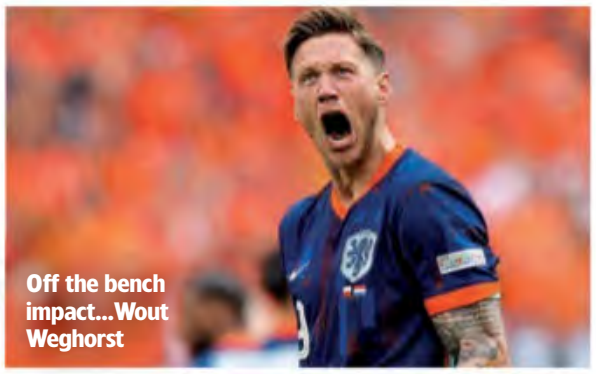
Volksparkstadion, Hamburg
Att: 48,117 Ref: Soares Dias (Por)

POLAND Szczesny – Bednarek, Salamon (Bereszynski 86), Kiwior; Romanczuk (Slisz 55); Frankowski, S. Szymanski (Moder 46), Zielinski (Piotrowski 78), Zalewski; Urbanski (Swiderski 55), Buksa

NETHERLANDS Verbruggen – Dumfries, De Vrij, Van Dijk, Ake (Van de Ven 87); Schouten, Veerman (Wijnaldum 62); Simons (Malen 62), Reijnders, Gakpo (Frimpong 81); Depay (Weghorst 81)
■ Veerman

GOALS

1-0 Adam Buksa rises above the Dutch defence to head home Piotr Zielinski's corner.
1-1 Cody Gakpo's strike takes a wicked deflection off Bartosz Salamon that wrong-foots Poland keeper Wojciech Szczesny.
1-2 Nathan Ake finds substitute Wout Weghorst, who nips in ahead of Salamon and provides a clinical left-foot finish.


Off the bench impact...Wout Weghorst

WEGHORST'S MATCH-WINNING IMPACT

Adam Buksa replaced Poland's injured talisman Robert Lewandowski and certainly made his mark, opening the scoring early on. That came despite Netherlands largely dominating, and there were signs of Dutch frustrations when Wojciech Szczesny denied Virgil van Dijk's volley, but frustration was replaced by relief when Cody Gakpo levelled the tie just before the half-hour mark, although Memphis Depay slid his effort agonisingly wide with the final touch of the first half. It looked as though Michal Probierz's valiant side would hold out for a point, but Wout Weghorst scored the winner two minutes after his introduction. Poland still competed until the end with Bart Verbruggen denying Nicola Zalewski's late strike.

Possession	
34%	66%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	
12(7)	21(4)
Corners	
3	6
Fouls	
10	8

MONDAY JUNE 17, 8PM

AUSTRIA (0) 0

FRANCE (1) 1
(Wober 38 og)

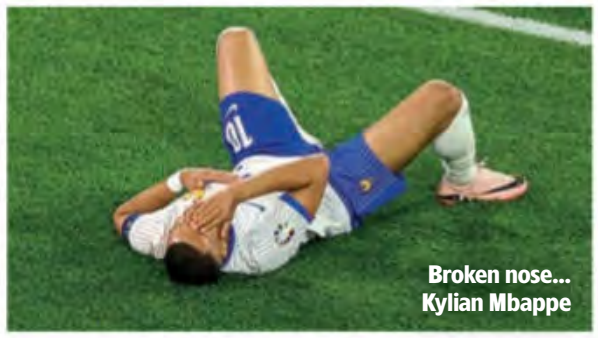
Merkur Spiel-Arena, Dusseldorf
Att: 46,425 Ref: Gil Manzano (Spa)

AUSTRIA Pentz – Posch, Danso, Wober (Trauner 59), Mwene (Prass 88); Seiwald, Grillitsch (Wimmer 60); Laimer (Schmid 92), Baumgartner, Sabitzer; Gregoritsch (Arnautovic 59)
■ Wober, Mwene, Baumgartner, Laimer, Danso

FRANCE Maignan – Kounde, Upamecano, Saliba, Hernandez; Griezmann (Fofana 90+1), Kante, Rabiot (Camavinga 71); Dembele (Kolo Muani 71), Thuram, Mbappe (Giroud 90)
■ Dembele, Mbappe

GOALS

0-1 Kylian Mbappe glides past Phillipp Mwene on the right and delivers a cross that Maximilian Wober can only head into his own net.


Broken nose... Kylian Mbappe

OWN GOAL INFLICTS AUSTRIAN WOES

Austria fearlessly pressed France as Ralf Rangnick's side aimed to cause a big upset. *Das Team* came agonisingly close to an opener when Marcel Sabitzer set up Christoph Baumgartner, who couldn't lift the ball over Mike Maignan, but they found themselves behind a mere two minutes later after Maximilian Wober's own goal. Kylian Mbappe missed a huge opportunity after racing through ten minutes into the second period and Ousmane Dembele hit an effort off-target as France looked for a second. It was an uncomfortable evening until the end for France, with Antoine Griezmann sustaining a cut to the head and Mbappe breaking his nose, but *Les Bleus* were the victors despite substitute Olivier Giroud miskicking his late chance.

MATTER OF FACT

At 37 years and 261 days old, France's all-time record scorer Giroud became the oldest player to represent *Les Bleus* at a major tournament.

Possession	
52%	48%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	
6(3)	14(3)
Corners	
6	2
Fouls	
18	11

FRIDAY JUNE 21, 5PM

POLAND (1) 1
(Piatek 30)

AUSTRIA (1) 3
(Trauner 9, Baumgartner 66, Arnautovic 78 pen)

Olympiastadion, Berlin
Att: 69,455 Ref: Umut Meler (Tur)

POLAND Szczesny – Bednarek, Dawidowicz, Kiwior; Slisz (Grosicki 75); Frankowski, Zielinski, Piotrowski (Moder 46), Zalewski (Urbanski 87); Piatek (Lewandowski 60), Buksa (Swiderski 60)
■ Slisz, Moder, Lewandowski, Szczesny

AUSTRIA Pentz – Posch, Trauner (Danso 59), Lienhart, Mwene (Prass 63); Seiwald, Grillitsch (Wimmer 46); Baumgartner (Schmid 81), Laimer, Sabitzer; Arnautovic (Gregoritsch 81)
■ Wimmer, Arnautovic

GOALS

0-1 Philipp Mwene's long throw is partially cleared, and he crosses for Gernot Trauner to head home emphatically at the near post.
1-1 Krzysztof Piatek pounces after Trauner blocks Jan Bednarek's initial goalbound effort.
1-2 Marko Arnautovic dummies Alexander Prass' pass and Christoph Baumgartner fools Wojciech Szczesny with a composed finish.
1-3 Marcel Sabitzer is brought down by Szczesny, who is sent the wrong way by Arnautovic's penalty.

Penalty...Szczesny brings down Sabitzer

AUSTRIA SINK POLAND

Austria flew out the blocks, taking the lead just nine minutes in. Poland fought for a foothold, with Nicola Zalewski missing a big opportunity and Piotr Zielinski having two shots blocked, before Krzysztof Piatek restored parity. The scores remained even going into the break, with Marcel Sabitzer seeing one shot blocked and another fizz marginally wide, before Zielinski's free-kick was well saved by Patrick Pentz. Poland fans were offered short-lived excitement when Robert Lewandowski was introduced on the hour-mark with the match finely poised, before Christoph Baumgartner and Marko Arnautovic goals secured an Austrian victory.

Possession	
47%	53%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	
15(3)	15(9)
Corners	
4	3
Fouls	
15	15

GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AUSTRIA	3	2	0	1	6	4	6
FRANCE	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
NETHERLANDS	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
POLAND	3	0	1	2	3	6	1

FRIDAY JUNE 21, 8PM

NETHERLANDS (0) 0

FRANCE (0) 0

Red Bull Arena, Leipzig
Att: 38,531 Ref: Taylor (Eng)

NETHERLANDS Verbruggen – Dumfries, De Vrij, Van Dijk, Ake; Schouten (Veerman 73), Reijnders; Frimpong (Geertruida 73), Simons (Wijnaldum 73), Gakpo; Depay (Weghorst 79)
Schouten

FRANCE Maignan – Kounde, Upamecano, Saliba, Hernandez; Kante, Tchouameni; Dembele (Coman 75), Griezmann, Rabiot; Thuram (Giroud 75)

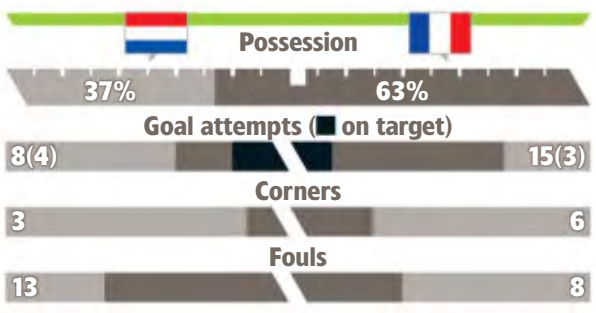
Stalemate...the two captains clash

SIMONS DENIED IN HEAVYWEIGHT CLASH

This clash between two European giants got off to a blistering start with Jeremie Frimpong and Antoine Griezmann seeing a shot apiece saved inside the opening four minutes. Proceedings soon slowed down as France took control, but an opener evaded them as Adrien Rabiot tried to pass to Griezmann when there was a golden shooting opportunity. Netherlands quickened things up occasionally as they defended well and looked to catch *Les Bleus* on the break. Didier Deschamps was visibly furious as chances came and went for his side around the hour-mark, with Bart Verburggen glancing Griezmann's attempt wide from the best of those. Any frustrations were momentarily compounded when Xavi Simons fired home, but there was a reprieve with Denzel Dumfries adjudged to be obstructing Mike Maignan following a lengthy VAR check. The teams eventually had to settle for a point each with Wout Weghorst blocking N'Golo Kante's late strike.

MATTER OF FACT

There had been 50 games at the Euros without a goalless draw in between this one and England's stalemate with Scotland in 2021.



TUESDAY JUNE 25, 5PM

FRANCE (0) 1
(Mbappe 56 pen)

POLAND (0) 1
(Lewandowski 79 pen)

Westfalenstadion, Dortmung
Att: 59,728 Ref: Guida (Ita)

FRANCE Maignan – Kounde, Upamecano, Saliba, Hernandez; Kante (Griezmann 61), Tchouameni (Fofana 81), Rabiot (Camavinga 61); Dembele (Kolo Muani 86), Mbappe, Barcola (Giroud 61)
Rabiot

POLAND Skorupski – Bednarek, Dawidowicz, Kiwior; Frankowski, S. Szymanski (Swiderski 68), Moder, Zielinski, Zalewski (Skoras 68); Lewandowski, Urbanski
Zalewski, Dawidowicz, Swiderski

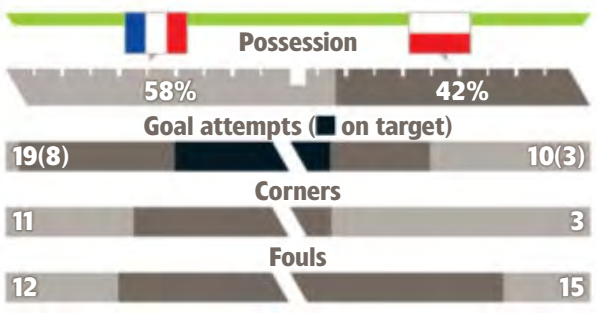
GOALS

1-0 Jakub Kiwior lunges into a rash tackle on the onrushing Ousmane Dembele, conceding a penalty that Kylian Mbappe sends Lukasz Skorupski the wrong way from.
1-1 Dayot Upamecano catches Karol Swiderski to concede a penalty and Robert Lewandowski scores at the second attempt after Mike Maignan strayed off his goalline.

First-ever Euros goal ...Kylian Mbappe

POLAND HOLD FRANCE

Poland's exit had already been confirmed, but they weren't going to lay out the red carpet for France. Incoming goalkeeper Lukasz Skorupski embodied that by rushing out to deny Ousmane Dembele, while Robert Lewandowski saw a header deflected wide by William Saliba before Skorupski denied two Mbappe efforts. France's masked marksman hit two more curling efforts, then eventually made the breakthrough from the spot. Poland drew level with a penalty of their own – even if Lewandowski made harder work of it – and both teams went for a winner as Lewandowski sent an audacious shot wide and Jan Bednarek blocked Olivier Giroud's effort. The point meant *Les Bleus* had to settle for second.



TUESDAY JUNE 25, 5PM

NETHERLANDS (0) 2
(Gakpo 47, Depay 75)

AUSTRIA (1) 3
(Malen 6 og, Schmid 59, Sabitzer 80)

Olympiastadion, Berlin
Att: 68,363 Ref: Kruzliak (Svk)

NETHERLANDS Verbruggen – Geertruida, De Vrij, Van Dijk, Ake (Van de Ven 65); Schouten, Reijnders (Wijnaldum 65), Veerman (Simons 35); Malen (Weghorst 72), Depay, Gakpo

AUSTRIA Pentz – Posch, Lienhart (Baumgartner 62), Wober, Prass; Seiwald, Grillitsch (Querfeld 62); Schmid (Weimann 90+2), Sabitzer, Wimmer (Laimer 62); Arnautovic (Gregoritsch 78)
Posch, Wimmer, Querfeld

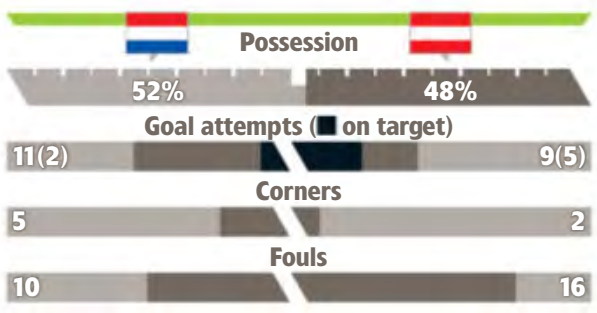
GOALS

0-1 Donyell Malen slides to cut out Alexander Prass' low cross but instead inadvertently deflects it past his own goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen.
1-1 Xavi Simons bursts forward and lays the ball off for Cody Gakpo, who curls it in.
1-2 Romano Schmid heads home despite Stefan de Vrij's best efforts to block it on the line.
2-2 Wout Weghorst nods the ball down for Memphis Depay, who provides a brilliant finish.
2-3 Marcel Sabitzer latches onto Christoph Baumgartner's pass and smashes it high into the roof of the net at Verbruggen's near post.

Smashed finish... Marcel Sabitzer

SCINTILLATING AUSTRIA SPARKLE

Austria got off to a commanding start and were rewarded just six minutes in. In contrast, underwhelming attempts from Tijjani Reijnders and Donyell Malen summarised Netherlands' first half – as did Ronald Koeman making a substitution after 35 minutes. *Oranje* conjured two equalisers in the second half, but Ralf Rangnick's irrepressible Austrians regained their lead both times. Despite Christoph Baumgartner having a goal ruled out, *Das Team* secured victory and shocked Europe by topping the group as Weghorst headed over late on.



GROUP E

MONDAY JUNE 17, 2PM

ROMANIA (1) 3
(Stanciu 29, R. Marin 53, Dragus 57)

UKRAINE (0) 0

Allianz Arena, Munich
Att: 61,591 Ref: Nyberg (Swe)

ROMANIA Nita – Ratiu, Dragusin, Burca, Bancu; M. Marin (Rus 75); Man (Hagi 62), R. Marin, Stanciu (Racovitan 87), Coman (Mihaila 62); Dragus (Puscas 75)
■ R. Marin

UKRAINE Lunin – Konoplya (Tymchyk 72), Zabarnyi, Matviyenko, Zinchenko; Shaparenko (Yaremchuk 63), Stepanenko (Brazhko 62); Tsyhankov (Yarmolenko 63), Sudakov (Malinovskyi 83), Mudryk; Dovbyk
■ Konoplya

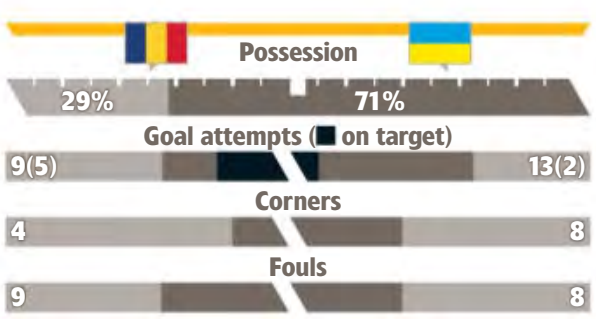
GOALS

1-0 Nicolae Stanciu capitalises on Dennis Man cutting out Andriy Lunin's stray pass by hitting a stunning 20-yard curler into the top corner.
2-0 A brilliant Romanian break forward culminates in Razvan Marin's low effort from long range sneaking under Lunin's hand.
3-0 A well-worked short corner sees Man square the ball for Denis Dragus to tap it into the vacant net from close range.

Peach...Nicolae Stanciu's curler hits the top corner

TRICOLORII OFF TO FLYING START

Romania saw very little of the ball during the opening half-hour, but defended resolutely to nullify Ukraine. Edward Iordanescu's side then went ahead through a spectacular Nicolae Stanciu goal and used that as a springboard to go on the front foot, with the captain coming close to another eye-catching goal when he hit the crossbar directly from a corner. Things only got better for Romania in the second period with two more goals being scored by the 57th minute. Their defence, which was expertly marshalled by an animated Radu Dragusin, kept their clean sheet with Roman Yaremchuk's inventive shot bouncing behind off the crossbar.



MONDAY JUNE 17, 5PM

BELGIUM (0) 0

SLOVAKIA (1) 0
(Schranz 7)

Waldstadion, Frankfurt
Att: 45,181 Ref: Umut Meler (Tur)

BELGIUM Casteels – Castagne, Faes, Debast, Carrasco (Lukebakio 84); Onana, Mangala (Bakayoko 57); Doku (Openda 84), De Bruyne, Trossard (Tielemans 74); Lukaku
■ Mangala, Tielemans, Lukebakio

SLOVAKIA Dubravka – Pekarik, Vavro, Skriniar, Hancko; Kucka, Lobotka, Duda (Obert 90+4); Schranz (Duris 81), Bozenik (Strelec 70), Haraslin (Suslov 70)
■ Schranz

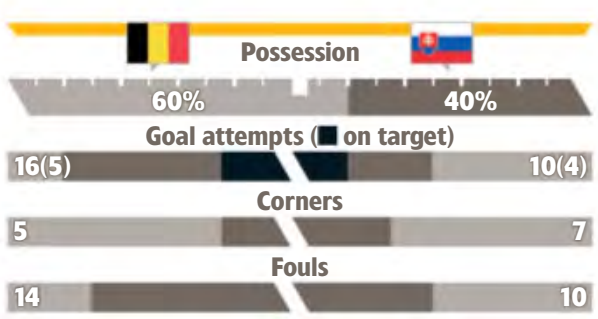
GOALS

0-1 Ivan Schranz flicks Jeremy Doku's risky wayward pass to Juraj Kucka, and punishes it by finishing from a tight angle after Koen Casteels saves his team-mate's initial attempt.

Upset... Slovakia celebrate

VAR DENIES LUKAKU AGAINST SLOVAKIA

Jeremy Doku provided a threat down Belgium's right, but it was his mistake that contributed to Slovakia taking the lead a mere seven minutes into proceedings. There were further reasons for Francesco Calzona to be encouraged, with Lukas Haraslin forcing an impressive save from Koen Casteels, although Leandro Trossard and Romelu Lukaku both squandered opportunities either side of that volley. Belgium were in control for much of the second half and thought they had drawn level shortly before the hour-mark, but Lukaku strayed marginally offside before tapping the ball in. Johan Bakayoko was then denied by David Hancko's heroic defending on the goalline. Belgium were left frustrated yet again after Lukaku had another goal disallowed, this time due to a handball by Lois Openda in the build-up, while Slovakia jubilantly celebrated a momentous and hard-fought victory.



FRIDAY JUNE 21, 2PM

SLOVAKIA (1) 1
(Schranz 17)

UKRAINE (0) 2
(Shaparenko 54, Yaremchuk 80)

Merkur Spiel-Arena, Dusseldorf
Att: 43,910 Ref: Oliver (Eng)

SLOVAKIA Dubravka – Pekarik, Vavro, Skriniar, Hancko (Obert 67); Kucka, Lobotka, Duda (Benes 60); Schranz (Sauer 86), Bozenik (Strelec 60), Haraslin (Suslov 67)

UKRAINE Trubin – Tymchyk, Zabarnyi, Matviyenko, Zinchenko; Shaparenko (Talovyerov 90+2), Brazhko (Sydorchuk 85); Yarmolenko (Zubkov 67), Sudakov, Mudryk (Malinovskyi 85); Dovbyk (Yaremchuk 67)
■ Yaremchuk

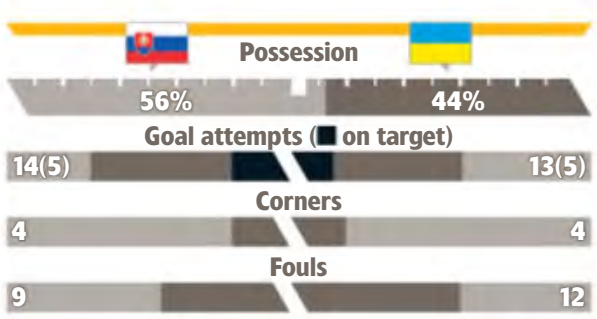
GOALS

1-0 After some early Slovakia pressure, Lukas Haraslin delivers a looping right-wing cross that Ivan Schranz heads down across Anatoliy Trubin.
1-1 Mykola Shaparenko applies a cool first-time finish to Oleksandr Zinchenko's pinpoint pass.
1-2 Shaparenko plays the ball over the top for substitute Roman Yaremchuk, who produces a sublime touch and deft finish past the keeper.

Late goal... sub Roman Yaremchuk nets the winner

SHAPARENKO LEADS TURNAROUND

Serhiy Rebrov replaced Andriy Lunin with Anatoliy Trubin, and he made some strong saves to stop Lukas Haraslin, Ivan Schranz and David Hancko. But the goalkeeper was beaten by Schranz 17 minutes in as Slovakia's early dominance was rewarded. Despite struggling, Ukraine had chances with Peter Pekarik denying Artem Dovbyk and Oleksandr Tymchyk hitting the post. Ukraine emerged for the second half defiantly, drawing level nine minutes after the restart and continuing to push on. Sub Roman Yaremchuk's poor pass pushed Mykhailo Mudryk wide before the winger hit the post, but he more than made amends with a piece of magic that secured Ukraine's much-needed victory.



GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ROMANIA	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
BELGIUM	3	1	1	1	2	1	4
SLOVAKIA	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
UKRAINE	3	1	1	1	2	4	4

SATURDAY JUNE 22, 8PM

BELGIUM (1) 2
(Tielemans 2, De Bruyne 80)

ROMANIA (0) 0

RheinEnergieStadion, Cologne
Att: 42,535 Ref: Marciniak (Pol)

BELGIUM Casteels – Castagne, Faes, Vertonghen, Theate (Debast 77); Tielemans (Mangala 72), Onana; Lukebakio (Trossard 56), De Bruyne, Doku (Carrasco 72); Lukaku
Lukebakio

ROMANIA Nita – Ratiu (Sorescu 90), Dragusin, Burca, Bancu; M. Marin (Olaru 68); Man, R. Marin, Stanciu, Mihaila (Hagi 68); Dragus (Alibec 81)
Bancu, M. Marin

GOALS

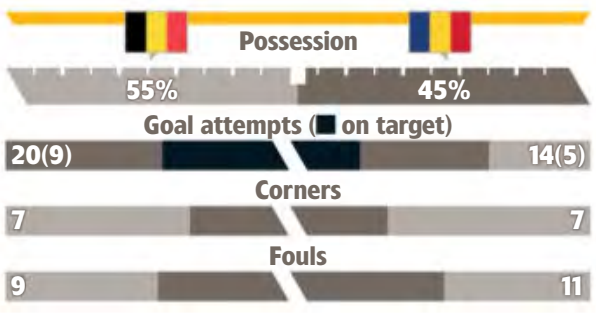
1-0 After patient build-up play, Romelu Lukaku lays the ball off for Youri Tielemans to fire a brilliant first-time effort past Florin Nita.

2-0 Kevin De Bruyne slides to pokes the ball in after Koen Casteels' route-one long pass evades the entire Romanian defence.

Vital goal... Kevin De Bruyne

DE BRUYNE LEADS BELGIUM TO WIN

Belgium wasted no time in answering their critics, opening the scoring 73 seconds into proceedings to record their fastest-ever goal at a major tournament. Radu Dragusin saw his header tipped over as Romania tried to conjure an immediate response, but Jeremy Doku best encapsulated the Red Devils' imperious nature in the first half, giving Andrei Ratiu plenty of problems. Valentin Mihaila had a chance as Romania re-emerged defiantly but it wasn't long until Belgium re-established themselves with Kevin De Bruyne taking control. The midfielder played a perfectly weighted pass for yet another Romelu Lukaku goal that was ruled out, before nipping in to seal the win. Edward Iordanescu's side kept going but Timothy Castagne dealt with Denis Alibec's attempt to ensure there was no concern in the latter stages.



WEDNESDAY JUNE 26, 5PM

SLOVAKIA (1) 1
(Duda 24)

ROMANIA (1) 1
(R. Marin 37 pen)

Waldstadion, Frankfurt
Att: 45,033 Ref: Siebert (Ger)

SLOVAKIA Dubravka – Pekarik (Gyomber 90+2), Vavro, Skriniar, Hancko; Kucka, Lobotka, Duda (Bero 90+2); Schranz (Duris 78), Strelec (Bozenik 70), Haraslin (Suslov 70)
Duda

ROMANIA Nita – Ratiu, Dragusin, Burca, Bancu; M. Marin; Hagi (Man 66), R. Marin (Rus 86), Stanciu, Coman (Sorescu 58); Dragus (Puscas 67)
Burca, Bancu, Puscas

GOALS

1-0 Ondrej Duda rises unchallenged to meet Juraj Kucka's looping cross and head across goal.

1-1 Razvan Marin emphatically converts his penalty after David Hancko trips Ianis Hagi.

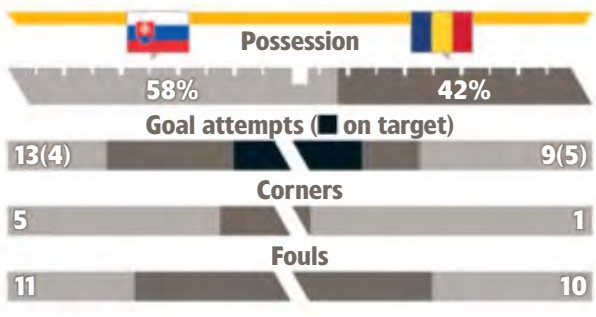
Equaliser...Razvan Marin scores from the penalty spot

SMILES ALL ROUND

Despite a point apiece seeing both countries through, there was no doubting the competitive nature of this contest. A well-placed Ondrej Duda header put Slovakia in front before Razvan Marin's penalty saw the sides go into the break level. Romania's goalscorer saw another shot saved and Denis Dragus came close shortly after the break, before Florin Nita did brilliantly to stop David Strelec's strike with an outstretched boot. There was a period of torrential rain in the second period but no dampening of ambition, with Andrei Ratiu and Lukas Haraslin playing out an entertaining battle of wits with the latter curling a shot agonisingly wide as the teams both earned the point they needed to progress.

MATTER OF FACT

Romania topped a European Championship group for the first time in their history.



WEDNESDAY JUNE 26, 5PM

UKRAINE (0) 0

BELGIUM (0) 0

MHPArena, Stuttgart
Att: 54,000 Ref: Taylor (Eng)

UKRAINE Trubin – Tymchyk, Zabarnyi, Svatok (Yarmolenko 81), Matviyenko, Mykolenko (Zinchenko 58); Shaparenko (Vanat 70), Brazhko (Stepanenko 70), Sudakov; Yaremchuk (Malinovskyi 70), Dovbyk
Dovbyk

BELGIUM Casteels – Castagne, Faes, Vertonghen, Theate; Onana, Tielemans (Mangala 62); Trossard (Carrasco 62), De Bruyne, Doku (Bakayoko 77); Lukaku (Openda 90)
Faes

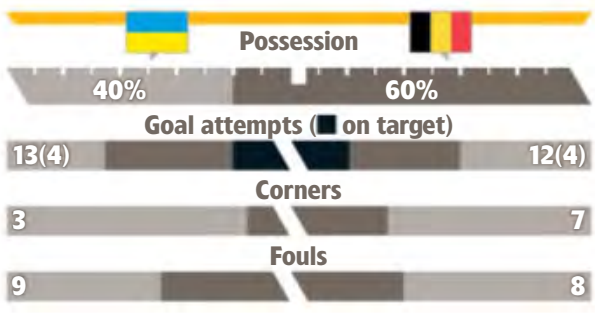
Heartbroken ...Ukraine players at the final whistle

UKRAINIAN HEARTS BROKEN

Belgium were disappointing going forward for large periods of the game but Kevin De Bruyne still displayed his creative capabilities, slipping the ball through masterfully for an opportunity that Romelu Lukaku couldn't take. He also hit the side netting with an audacious free-kick, while Roman Yaremchuk passed up a possible shooting chance at the other end and slid the ball too far ahead of Artem Dovbyk. Ukraine put in a determined display, as best embodied by Vitaliy Mykolenko blocking Jeremy Doku's shot moments before going off injured and Oleksandr Tymchyk making a brilliant recovery tackle. They couldn't get the all-important goal, though, as Dovbyk hit the side netting, Koen Casteels clawed away Ruslan Malinovskyi's corner, Taras Stepanenko headed off-target and Heorhiy Sudakov agonisingly shot straight at the keeper late on. Despite progressing, Belgium's players were booed by their fans at the final whistle.

MATTER OF FACT

Ukraine became the first team in history to be knocked out of the Euros group stage with four points, finishing bottom on goal difference.



GROUP F

TUESDAY JUNE 18, 5PM

TURKEY (1) 3
(Muldur 25, Guler 65, Akturkoglu 90+7)

GEORGIA (1) 1
(Mikautadze 32)

Westfalenstadion, Dortmund
Att: 59,127 Ref: Tello (Arg)

TURKEY Gunok – Muldur (Celik 85), Akaydin, Bardakci, Kadioglu; Calhanoglu (Ozcan 90+2), Ayhan (Demiral 79); Guler (Yazici 79), Kokcu, Yildiz (Akturkoglu 85); Yilmaz
Bardakci, Calhanoglu

GEORGIA Mamardashvili – Kakabadze, Kvirkvelia (Zivzivadze 85), Kashia, Dvali, Tsitaishvili (Lochoshvili 74); Chakvetadze (Davitashvili 74), Mekvabishvili (Altunashvili 89), Kochorashvili; Mikautadze, Kvaratskhelia
Kvirkvelia

GOALS

1-0 Mert Muldur thumps in an exquisite volley after Lasha Dvali fails to adequately head clear.
1-1 Giorgi Kochorashvili beats Kenan Yildiz and cuts the ball back for Georges Mikautadze to instinctively finish side-footed at the near post.
2-1 Arda Guler cuts inside and picks out the top corner with a sensational 25-yard strike.
3-1 Giorgi Mamardashvili leaves his goal to go up for a corner and Turkey take advantage, with Kerem Akturkoglu racing forward to score.

Late drama...Turkey celebrate their third goal

TURKEY WIN THRILLER

Turkey had already seen Kaan Ayhan hit the post before Mert Muldur opened the scoring. It looked like Georgia would be blown away when Kenan Yildiz converted moments later, but he was caught marginally offside and Willy Sagnol's team drew level through Georges Mikautadze, who then came agonisingly close to scoring another. Giorgi Mamardashvili denied a venomous free-kick from Hakan Calhanoglu before being left helpless by Arda Guler, the youngest-ever Euros debut goalscorer at 19 years and 114 days old. The woodwork saved Turkey twice and Samet Akaydin heroically denied Zuriko Davitashvili before Kerem Akturkoglu sealed the victory amid a defeaning, white-hot atmosphere.

	Turkey	Georgia
Possession	56%	44%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	22(8)	14(5)
Corners	5	5
Fouls	10	7

TUESDAY JUNE 18, 8PM

PORTUGAL (0) 2
(Hranac 69 og), Conceicao 90+2)

CZECH REPUBLIC (0) 1
(Provod 62)

Red Bull Arena, Leipzig
Att: 38,421 Ref: Guida (Ita)

PORTUGAL Costa – Dias, Pepe, Mendes (Neto 90); Dalot (Inacio 63), B. Silva, Fernandes, Vitinha (Conceicao 90), Cancelo (Semedo 90); Ronaldo, Leao (Jota 63)
Leao, Conceicao

CZECH REPUBLIC Stanek – Holes (Chory 90+3), Hranac, Krejci; Soucek; Coufal, Provod (Barak 79), Sulc (Sevcik 79), Doudera; Kuchta (Lingr 60), Schick (Chytil 61)
Schick

GOALS

0-1 Vladimir Coufal lays the ball off for Lukas Provod to curl a brilliant strike in off the post.
1-1 Poor goalkeeping from Jindrich Stanek sees him push the ball from Nuno Mendes' header onto Robin Hranac and it bounces in.
2-1 Pedro Neto's ball goes through Hranac's legs and fellow substitute Francisco Conceicao capitalises with a clinical close-range finish.

Impact off the bench ...Francisco Conceicao

CONCEICAO POUNCES FOR PORTUGAL

Portugal quickly took control but were faced by a wall of disciplined and well-organised Czechs. Bruno Fernandes came close with a deflected strike while Cristiano Ronaldo – making a record sixth Euros finals appearance – saw his effort stopped by Jindrich Stanek before half-time. There was more impressive Czech defending as superb headers from Tomas Holes and Tomas Soucek denied Ronaldo clear-cut opportunities before Lukas Provod stunned *A Selecao*. An own goal got Portugal back on level terms but that luck didn't extend to Diogo Jota, whose goal was ruled out due to Ronaldo being marginally offside. That merely delayed Portugal's celebrations as Francisco Conceicao scored the winner two minutes into a dream competitive debut.

	Portugal	Czech Republic
Possession	73%	27%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	19(8)	5(1)
Corners	13	0
Fouls	6	9

SATURDAY JUNE 22, 2PM

GEORGIA (1) 1
(Mikautadze 45+4 pen)

CZECH REPUBLIC (0) 1
(Schick 59)

Volksparkstadion, Hamburg
Att: 46,524 Ref: Siebert (Ger)

GEORGIA Mamardashvili – Kvirkvelia (Gvelesiani 82), Kashia, Dvali; Kakabadze, Kochorashvili, Mekvabishvili, Tsitaishvili (Lochoshvili 62); Davitashvili (Chakvetadze 62), Mikautadze (Kvilitaia 88), Kvaratskhelia (Lobjanidze 82)
Kashia, Gvelesiani, Mekvabishvili, Kochorashvili

CZECH REPUBLIC Stanek – Holes, Hranac, Krejci; Coufal, Soucek, Provod (Barak 81), D. Jurasek (Sevcik 81); Cerny (M. Jurasek 55), Schick (Chytil 68), Hlozek (Lingr 55)
Coufal, Provod, D. Jurasek, Holes, Soucek

GOALS

1-0 Georges Mikautadze calmly sends Jindrich Stanek the wrong way after Robin Hranac's handball concedes a penalty.
1-1 Ondrej Lingr's header from an outswinging corner bounces off the post and hits Patrik Schick's chest before trickling over the line.

Bundled in... Patrik Schick

CZECHS RESCUE DESERVED POINT

Georgia's fearless approach continued to gain admirers but they looked frail in defending a long Vladimir Coufal throw, and only avoided punishment because Adam Hlozek handled the ball before scoring. The Czechs were undone by another handball at the other end before Giorgi Mamardashvili made one of many impressive saves to deny Patrik Schick before the break. While Anzor Mekvabishvili came agonisingly close to doubling Georgia's lead, much of the second half consisted of Ivan Hasek's team using their aerial threat to apply pressure, with Ladislav Krejci and Mojmir Chytil heading wide. Even with Georgia visibly tiring in the final quarter-hour, they had the last chance, which sub Saba Lobjanidze was devastated to miss.

	Georgia	Czech Republic
Possession	38%	62%
Goal attempts (■ on target)	5(1)	27(12)
Corners	5	11
Fouls	12	17

GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PORTUGAL	3	2	0	1	5	3	6
TURKEY	3	2	0	1	5	5	6
GEORGIA	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
CZECH REPUBLIC	3	0	1	2	3	5	1

SATURDAY JUNE 22, 5PM

TURKEY (0) 0
PORTUGAL (2) 3
(B. Silva 21, Akaydin 28 og, Fernandes 56)

Westfalenstadion, Dortmund
Att: 61,047 Ref: Zwayer (Ger)

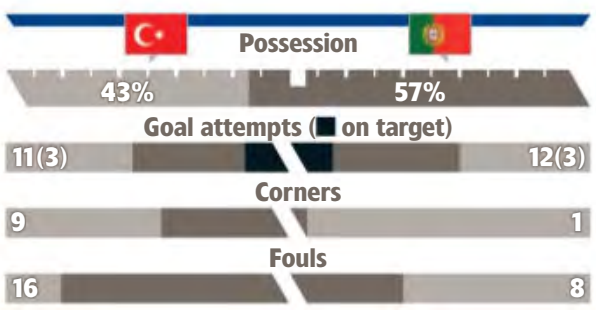
TURKEY Bayindir – Celik, Akaydin (Demiral 75), Bardakci, Kadioglu; Calhanoglu, Ayhan (Yuksek 58); Akgun (Guler 70), Kokcu (Yazici 46), Akturkoglu (Yildiz 58); Yilmaz
Bardakci, Akaydin, Celik

PORTUGAL Costa – Cancelo (Semedo 68), Dias, Pepe (A. Siva 83), Mendes; Vitinha (J. Neves 88), Palhinha (R. Neves 46); B. Silva, Fernandes, Leao (Neto 46); Ronaldo
Leao, Palhinha

GOALS
0-1 Nuno Mendes' low cross from inside the box on the left takes a touch off Orkun Kokcu and falls invitingly for Bernardo Silva to finish.
0-2 A calamitous mix-up sees Samet Akaydin's back-pass go past keeper Altay Bayindir and in.
0-3 After being played onside by Zeki Celik, Cristiano Ronaldo selflessly rolls the ball across for Bruno Fernandes to convert with ease.

First Euros goal... Bernardo Silva

OWN GOAL EMBARRASSES TURKEY
Portugal looked authoritative from the start, although Turkey created the first big opportunity with Kerem Akturkoglu unable to turn home Zeki Celik's cross. Even with that scare, Roberto Martinez's side retained a level of control that was further enhanced by two goals in the space of seven minutes. The embarrassing nature of the second seemed to knock Turkey's confidence, although Akturkoglu still showed nice footwork before being denied by Diogo Costa. More miscommunication in Turkey's backline gifted a third to Portugal, who enjoyed a comfortable second half in which preventing supporters from running onto the pitch for pictures with Ronaldo proved to be the biggest challenge.



WEDNESDAY JUNE 26, 8PM

GEORGIA (1) 2
(Kvaratskhelia 2, Mikautadze 57 pen)
PORTUGAL (0) 0

Arena AufSchalke, Gelsenkirchen
Att: 49,616 Ref: Scharer (Sui)

GEORGIA Mamardashvili – Kakabadze, Gvelesiani (Kverkvelia 76), Kashia, Dvali, Lochoshvili (Tsitaishvili 63); Chakvetadze (Mekvabishvili 81), Kiteishvili, Kochorashvili; Mikautadze, Kvaratskhelia (Davitashvili 81)
Mekvabishvili

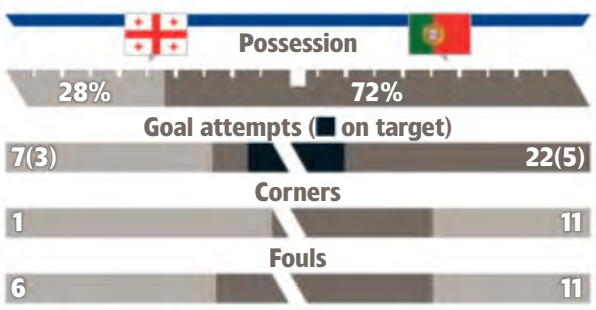
PORTUGAL Costa – A. Silva (Semedo 66), Danilo, Inacio; Dalot, J. Neves (Nunes 75), Palhinha (R. Neves 46), Neto (Jota 75); Conceicao, Felix; Ronaldo (Ramos 66)
Ronaldo, Neto, R. Neves

GOALS
1-0 Georges Mikautadze intercepts Antonio Silva's wayward pass and releases Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, who races forward and slots in.
2-0 Silva catches Luka Lochoshvili, conceding a penalty after a VAR check that Mikautadze converts despite Diogo Costa going the right way.

Shock result ...Kvaratskhelia celebrates scoring

GEORGIA MAKE HISTORY
After Kvaratskhelia got Georgia off to a flyer, Willy Sagnol's side had to work hard to defend their lead with help from Giorgi Mamardashvili, who palmed away a free-kick from Cristiano Ronaldo. Georgia still had further moments of promise with Giorgi Gvelesiani unable to divert a free-kick goalwards, but more defending was required after half-time as Lasha Dvali blocked efforts from Francisco Conceicao and Ronaldo. After Kvaratskhelia snatched at a chance and Mamardashvili stopped Diogo Dalot's strike from long range, Georgia got the second they craved. Portugal's efforts to come back proved futile as Georgia secured an historic victory.

MATTER OF FACT
Mikautadze became the ninth player to score in all three group matches at a men's Euros.



WEDNESDAY JUNE 26, 8PM

CZECH REPUBLIC (0) 1
(Soucek 66)
TURKEY (0) 2
(Calhanoglu 51, Tosun 90+4)

Volksparkstadion, Hamburg
Att: 47,683 Ref: Kovacs (Rou)

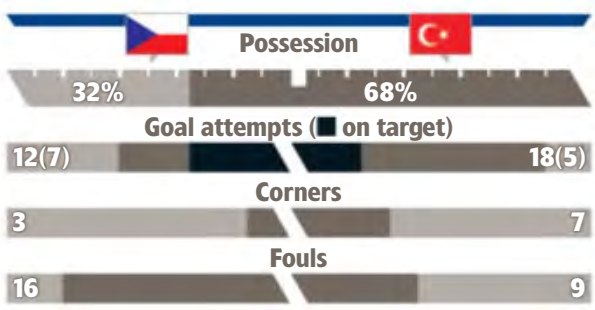
CZECH REPUBLIC Stanek (Kovar 55) – Holes, Hranac, Krejci; Coufal, Soucek, Provod (Lingr 75), D. Jurasek (M. Jurasek 81); Barak, Hlozek (Chory 55); Chytil (Kuchta 55)
Barak, Schick, Jaros, Cerv, Krejci, Soucek
Barak, Chory

TURKEY Gunok – Muldur, Akaydin, Demiral, Kadioglu; Ozcan (Ayhan 46), Yuksek (Yokuslu 63); Yilmaz, Calhanoglu (Kokcu 87), Yildiz (Akturkoglu 75); Guler (Tosun 75)
Ozcan, Yildiz, Yuksek, Gunok, Calhanoglu, Cakir, Muldur, Akaydin, Ayhan, Kokcu, Guler

GOALS
0-1 Hakan Calhanoglu smashes a pinpoint shot into the far bottom corner from a narrow angle.
1-1 Vladimir Coufal's long throw causes havoc and, after Tomas Chory's effort is blocked on the line, Tomas Soucek pounces to fire home.
1-2 Cenk Tosun cuts inside a tired Coufal and blasts his effort past sub keeper Matej Kovar.

Leaving it late ...Cenk Tosun

TURKEY EDGE FIERY ENCOUNTER
Both sides showed early intent, but the Czechs were forced into a far more defensive approach when Antonin Barak picked up two yellow cards inside 20 minutes. That also changed the game's temperature despite the match remaining level at half-time. Hakan Calhanoglu opened the scoring just six minutes into the second period, yet the Czechs responded well and eventually forced an equaliser in spite of keeper Jindrich Stanek getting injured. Both teams went all-out for the win – even though Turkey didn't need a victory to progress – and an all-action ending to the clash culminated in Cenk Tosun's decider before emotions spilled over at full-time.



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Argentina's dominance continues

Copa America review by Tim Vickery

Campeones... **Argentina captain Lionel Messi lifts the Copa trophy**

THE FINAL

ARGENTINA (0) 1
(La. Martinez 112)
COLOMBIA (0) 0

Argentina emerged from the chaos in Miami with another title, and the record 16th Copa America win hinted that there is life after Lionel Messi.

There will have to be life after Angel Di Maria, who retired from international football after the 1-0 win over Colombia. And Messi, too, is nearing the end. There were flashes from him, but they were more sporadic than in Qatar. An ankle injury picked up towards the end of the first half forced him out of the final in the 66th minute, and it is certainly arguable that Argentina improved without him.

Colombia were the better side in the first half, with Jhon Cordoba clipping the post and the set-pieces of James Rodriguez causing problems. But as the game wore on Argentina became more dangerous. Nico Gonzalez, who replaced Messi, came close a few times, but in the second half of extra-time it was three other substitutes who decided the game. Leandro Paredes, Giovani Lo Celso and Lautaro Martinez all came on together seven minutes into extra-time, and their combination won the cup. Paredes won the ball and played a crisp forward pass to Lo Celso, whose inspired lay-off gave Lautaro the chance to fire past the keeper for his fifth goal of the Copa. The fact that Argentina had the tournament top scorer on the bench is a story in itself.

Argentina reached the final via the clearly easier half of the draw. Their biggest test, and the only time they conceded a goal, came in the quarter-final against Ecuador. After a poor group phase, Ecuador got their team right for this game, with three central midfielders giving Moises Caicedo the freedom to run forward and link the side together.

GOALS we'd like to see again

1 CHRISTIAN PULISIC
USA v Bolivia
The United States got off to a flyer, with their captain bending in a superb curling shot just three minutes into the opening game. Sadly for the hosts, it was mostly downhill from there.

2 VINICIUS JUNIOR
Paraguay v **BRAZIL**
After Brazil's quarter-final exit, nobody would say that *Jogo Bonito* has been revived, but it was briefly on show in the group stage after Vinicius capped a slick passing move with a smart finish.

3 SALOMON RONDON
VENEZUELA v Canada
This is worth re-watching just to answer the question: bad goalkeeping or great finishing? While Rondon's looping, half-volleyed 40-yard lob was inch-perfect, the positioning of Canada keeper Maxime Crepeau was curious to say the least.

4 ISMAEL KONE
CANADA v Uruguay
Kone's scissor-kick demonstrated not only great athleticism but also great imagination. With his back to goal, the midfielder's improvised finish caught Uruguay's keeper completely off-guard.

5 LAUTARO MARTINEZ
ARGENTINA v Colombia
Having been replaced in the starting line-up during the 2022 World Cup in Qatar – and again here – Lautaro demonstrated his quality by winning the Copa Golden Boot, sealed by netting the winner in the final.

They nearly snatched it at the end too, and Argentina keeper Emiliano Martinez had to come up with his customary heroics in the shootout – especially after Messi had missed with the opening penalty.

Coach Lionel Scaloni had a rethink and, as he had done in Qatar, dropped Lautaro in favour of Julian Alvarez. Yet in the World Cup Lautaro had hit a run of poor form; here, he was top scorer. But with Messi doing so little, the team needed the running power and the build-up involvement of the Manchester City striker, and so Lautaro had to wait on the bench for his chance to be the hero.

Messi was using this competition as a testing ground to judge whether he will be able to do himself justice in 2026. On this evidence, the Copa may turn out to be his last tournament – certainly the tears that ran down as he watched the rest of the final from the bench suggested so. There was also symbolism in his gesture to ask Di Maria and Nico Otamendi to lift the trophy with him. Di Maria now leaves the stage, Otamendi has lost his place to Lisandro Martinez and it is unclear how long Messi can go on. But if this is the end, then he can look back on a glorious final three years of what for so long was a frustrating international career. The previous time the Copa was held in the USA, eight years ago when Argentina lost the final on penalties to Chile, Messi announced his Argentina retirement straight afterwards. How splendid – for him and for football – that he quickly changed his mind.

> On this evidence, the Copa may turn out to be Messi's last tournament

With their devoted army of fans so confident of glory, Colombia fell short on their big day. Their only Copa win came on home ground in 2001 – a tournament for which Argentina refused to turn up due to security concerns. Claiming this title would have been the biggest achievement in Colombian footballing history, and for much of the competition they looked worthy of it, extending their unbeaten run to 28 matches. Nestor Lorenzo's well-coached, well-structured side allowed James Rodriguez to flower, finding space to serve as the supply line for Luis Diaz. Jhon Cordoba proved an interesting addition to the front line, but perhaps the team lacks a genuinely top-class centre-forward. Still, they made impressive progress through the more difficult half of the draw, and it is possible that the balance was tipped against them in the semi-finals.

Argentina had a relatively gentle game against Canada – who enjoyed a fine tournament but were unlikely

Winning goal...tournament top goalscorer Lautaro Martinez strikes the winner for Argentina in the final against Colombia

Player of the Tournament...Colombia talisman James Rodriguez rekindled his form in the US

Runners-up...Colombia impressed on their run to the final

to give serious problems to the reigning world and continental champions. Colombia, meanwhile, had to fight their way past Marcelo Bielsa's Uruguay in a match full of friction. This was not uncommon in the 48th version of the Copa. The pitches used here were smaller than usual (and also often sub-standard), which had the effect of turning some of the games into a physical battle. Colombia against Uruguay was intense – decided by a Jefferson Lerma header from a James corner – and Colombia had to play more than half the game with ten men after losing otherwise excellent right-back Daniel Munoz to a silly red card just before half-time. They also had a day less to rest than Argentina, and given the fierce heat that prevailed during the competition, it would hardly be surprising if all of this took a toll.

Uruguay claimed third place, beating Canada on penalties after a late Luis Suarez goal had saved them from defeat in normal time. Uruguay scored eight goals in the first two games, but losing centre-back Ronald Araujo – who was also unable to take the field in Qatar – was a huge blow. His front-foot, aggressive defending brought the line higher and allowed the team to stay more compact. Once he was injured and the opposition got stronger, they were more spaced out and the goals dried up. Darwin Nunez was on target in both of the opening games, meaning that he had scored in six consecutive competitive matches. But he missed plenty as well, and spurned three good chances in the first half against Colombia. Uruguay also needed a penalty shootout to get past Brazil in the quarter-final after a thoroughly depressing 0-0 draw.

Brazil were one of the Copa's major disappointments. The bright spark in their only victory was a fine performance by Vinicius Junior, probably his best for his

> Claiming this title would have been the biggest achievement in Colombian footballing history, and for much of the competition they looked worthy of it

Golden oldies... Argentine veterans Di Maria, Messi and Otamendi

TEAM OF THE TOURNAMENT

GOALKEEPER

Emiliano MARTINEZ
(Argentina)
Took the team up a level as soon as he was introduced in 2021. Once more he was the giant, charismatic figure spreading confidence through the side. Only beaten once and, especially in penalty shootouts, appears to fill the goal with his size and personality. Arguably his country's best-ever goalkeeper.

DEFENDERS

Ronald ARAUJO
(Uruguay)
The gifted centre-back is less of a defender and more a force of nature, with speed, power, personality and class on the ball. Held the team together when they were under the cosh against the United States, and his injury against Brazil and subsequent absence demonstrated just how vital he is for the team.

Davinson SANCHEZ
(Colombia)
Centre-back who was often maligned during his time in the Premier League with Tottenham Hotspur. Has recovered his confidence in Turkey and hardly put a foot wrong in the tournament. Showed exceptional recovery speed in coping with Vinicius Junior, won his tackles and was particularly commanding in the air in both penalty areas.

Willian PACHO
(Ecuador)
One of the many graduates from Independiente del Valle, the big left-footed centre-back first caught the eye with his passing out of defence. Spells in Belgium and now Germany have tightened up his defending skills, and after being unused in Qatar he had an excellent tournament. Already looks his country's senior defender.

MIDFIELDERS

Rodrigo DE PAUL
(Argentina)
Lionel Messi's most loyal lieutenant was the best of Argentina's midfield options in this competition. From his starting position on the right of centre he continually found the stamina to drive the team forward, while showing increased tactical discipline, and his energy was contagious.

Richard RIOS
(Colombia)
Discovered playing futsal in Brazil, made his name with Palmeiras and was shrewdly brought into the Colombia squad late last year. Made his first start in March, and it is already hard to imagine the team without him. Versatile and dynamic, able to win the ball, pass it, run with it and shoot.

James RODRIGUEZ
(Colombia)
Ten years on from his Brazil 2014 Golden Boot heroics, the forgotten figure at club level was named Player of the Tournament after coming up with one goal and six assists, all via his magical left foot. His precise cross to set up *Los Cafeteros'* opening goal against Paraguay was one of the Copa's outstanding moments.

Jacob SHAFFELBURG
(Canada)
Left-footed winger who started the Copa on the bench but soon made himself impossible to drop. Operated on either flank and worried every defence that he came across, beating his man, sending in crosses and looking to get into the box and shoot. A splendid revelation.

FORWARDS

Luis DIAZ
(Colombia)
The James-Diaz axis was the highlight of Colombia's challenge, with the Liverpool man always ready to latch on to long passes, surge on goal or set up chances for his team-mates. Worked ferociously hard, always carried a threat and deserved more than his two goals in the finals.

Salomon RONDON
(Venezuela)
Big centre-forward who showed that even at the age of 34 he still has plenty to offer. Has lost some pace, but remains a real handful leading the attacking line. Scored three goals, and the clever lob against Canada from near the halfway line was one of the Copa's highlights.

Lautaro MARTINEZ
(Argentina)
The tournament top scorer with five goals, who was dropped for the last two games, then came off the bench to score the title-winning goal. It is a tribute to his professionalism and to his coach's man management that he reacted so positively to losing his place. Any trauma hanging over from his loss of form in Qatar has been buried.

country, in a 4-1 triumph over Paraguay. But, on a yellow card, he was needlessly risked in a meaningless group game with Colombia, picked up another yellow and was suspended for the quarter-final. This was a bizarre selection choice by coach Dorival Junior, who did not have a good debut tournament. He was supposed to be a calming influence, but cut an uptight figure on the touchline, further worsening a side already with a tendency towards the excessively frenetic. Dorival had a few solid weeks on the training ground with his players – the dream of a national team coach. But there was no sense of evolution and, most disappointing of all, in the last two games against tough opponents there seemed to be no plan for passing the ball out of defence.

Brazil's rivals for disappointments of the Copa were hosts USA, whose first-round elimination was the shock of the competition. The team looks capable of far better, but the margins in tournament football can be very thin. A feature of this tournament – perhaps enhanced by the heat – was the difficulty of playing for long periods with ten men. The USA beat Bolivia and started brightly against Panama, but an early red card for Timothy Weah proved decisive, with Panama striking back to win. And needing to beat Uruguay, an early injury to impressive centre-forward Folarin Balogun put the task beyond them.

TEAM BY TEAM

GROUP-STAGE EXITS

CHILE
There were plenty of goals in the first friendlies under Ricardo Gareca, but none in the Copa. They should have put Peru away in the opener, and were very unlucky with the refereeing against Canada in the crunch third match, but this was a big disappointment at the site of the great triumph of 2016.

PERU
There were no goals and precious little football in the first competitive games under Jorge Fossati. The new back-three system looked reasonably solid, but the team's fate was effectively decided by an early red card against Canada. They will have to find much more creativity to have any hopes of being back in 2026.

MEXICO
Lived up to their billing as Mexico's worst team in living memory, disappointing their mass support by scoring a single goal in three games. Their best display came in defeat; despite shading the meeting with Venezuela, they went down 1-0 after missing a late penalty – the decisive moment in a very poor campaign.

JAMAICA
Before the finals, preparations were undermined by star man Leon Bailey declining his call-up to the Copa squad. At them, if an offside flag hadn't denied Michail Antonio in the first game versus Mexico, the Reggae Boyz might have had something to build on. Instead they collapsed to three defeats, prompting the resignation of coach Heimir Hallgrimsson.

UNITED STATES
The hosts' elimination was the major surprise of the first round, especially as the USA enjoyed some good moments as an aggressive side with options in the final third. But tournament football turns on details, and Timothy Weah's early red card v Panama – and a passive approach when down to ten men – proved fatal. Coach Gregg Berhalter was swiftly axed.

BOLIVIA
A disaster. Before the Copa, a local paper identified three areas for improvement – defensive solidity, ball retention and the creation of chances, and that assessment proved correct. The worst team on show, they left the tournament with no grounds for optimism apart from the chance of picking up World Cup qualification points at the altitude of La Paz.

COSTA RICA
The happiest of all the teams eliminated during the group phase. Gustavo Alfaro's young side showed the grit and defensive determination to grind out a goalless draw with Brazil, and then got off to an exhilarating goalscoring start against Paraguay. They come away from the tournament with plenty to build on.

PARAGUAY
In a tough group the results were clearly disastrous, with only Bolivia conceding more. They could not defend effectively v Brazil, and were punished by Costa Rica when they went with an attacking line-up. The bright spot is that Julio Enciso had a good tournament on his return from injury, and should make a difference when World Cup qualification resumes.

Impressive... Canada reached the semi-finals

QUARTER-FINAL EXITS

VENEZUELA
Losing to Canada on penalties was painful, but the main project – a World Cup debut in 2026 – is more on course than ever, as Venezuela bowed out of the Copa unbeaten with three wins in

Costly red card... USA forward Timothy Weah

Still got it... Venezuela striker Salomon Rondon

four games. Salomon Rondon showed that he could continue to lead the front line – only Argentina's Lautaro Martinez scored more goals than the Pachuca man.

ECUADOR

Despite a solid start to 2026 World Cup qualification, coach Felix Sanchez was under pressure going into the Copa. His team played a disappointing group phase, but he got selection right against Argentina and pushed them all the way in the quarter-final. His reward? Straight after coming so close to a memorable upset, Sanchez was sacked.

PANAMA

Went down to a heavy 5-0 defeat against Colombia in the quarter-finals, but even in that game the team had attacking moments to look back on. Conceded plenty but full of brio going forward, and their elimination of the USA was the big shock of the first round. Come out of the Copa with credit enhanced.

BRAZIL

Another desperately disappointing quarter-final shootout defeat. True, they were unbeaten, but three draws in four games was a poor return for a side over-dependent on the counter-attack and unnecessarily frenetic. Living up to the expectations of a glorious history is not proving easy.

Runners-up... Colombia were inspired by James Rodriguez

FOURTH PLACE

CANADA

Only managed one win in 90 minutes – in the group stage against a Peru side that went a man down early – but come out of the finals with huge credit and morale greatly enhanced. They made an excellent impression and, with better finishing – an area they urgently need to improve – Canada can dream of a strong performance in 2026.

THIRD PLACE

URUGUAY

Third place was little consolation for the country that entered the Copa as the in-form team, and they leave with some doubts. Marcelo Bielsa's side started like a train but were then unable to win any of their last three games. The key moment was the loss of Ronald Araujo early in the quarter-final. Without the defender, the side was never the same.

RUNNERS-UP

COLOMBIA

Scored more goals than anyone else in the tournament, revived the career of James Rodriguez and gave their massive travelling army of supporters some wonderful memories. Fell at the final hurdle, but have clearly shrugged off the disastrous failure of missing out on the Qatar World Cup, and can build towards 2026 with confidence.

WINNERS

ARGENTINA

Yet another triumph as Lionel Scaloni's side showed that winning becomes a habit. The big question is whether this 16th Copa America success represents the end of an era. Alternatively, does the manner that the team overcame Colombia in the final send a message that the winning habit can be retained even in a post-Messi age?

Locked out... fans are left stuck outside the 2024 Copa America final

eye witness

James Nalton reports

UNITED STATES

Copa chaos

2026 World Cup dress rehearsal leaves a lot to be desired

Some time after the final whistle in the Copa America semi-final between Argentina and Canada at the MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, long after fans had filtered out having witnessed the Lionel Messi goal the majority had hoped for, a couple of tournament officials were out on the pitch dropping a football from various heights to measure how much it bounced. In parts, the pitch was reactive and lively and the ball bounced as expected. In others, it hit the ground with a dull, lifeless thud.

It was a test of the temporary grass

pitches used at this tournament, but it was also an apt metaphor for the 2024 Copa America as a whole: at times, it was lively, energetic and entertaining. At others, it left much to be desired, especially when it came to organisational issues, including what nearly turned into a disastrous showpiece final in Miami.

The competition served as something of a dress rehearsal for the 2026 World Cup, which will be co-hosted by the United States along with Mexico and Canada. With the main event now less than two years away, there are a number of concerns to address.

Thirty years on from USA '94, when stifling summer heat proved an inhibiting factor at a number of venues, soaring temperatures once again proved problematic. The fact that so many of the knockout games were tense, low-scoring affairs – six of the eight latter-stage matches featured two goals or fewer, with four decided by penalties – might be explained by the oppressive conditions, although the clearest demonstration of the heat came during the group stage. The sight of assistant referee Humberto Panjoj being stretchered off after collapsing during Peru v Canada will prompt questions about what measures should be taken in dealing with such high temperatures.

That, at least, was outside the organisers' control, but the same could not be said of the pitches. As well as the inconsistent bounce of the ball, the grass was also breaking up, exposing clear separations between the rolls of turf.

"They did press conferences to say that the pitches were perfect, but you can see the grass is poorly bonded," Uruguay coach Marcelo Bielsa said in a particularly fiery press conference ahead of the third-place game against Canada.

"Americans didn't tell us the grass was perfect, they admitted it was planted three days before the game. The joints of the grass panels are not closed. In yesterday's game [semi-final against Colombia] you can see the ball jumping in the box."

The tournament was played mostly in NFL stadiums across the United States. Some of these, including semi-final venues MetLife Stadium and the Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte, normally host games played on artificial turf. For tournaments such as the Copa America and the FIFA World Cup, grass is a requirement, so new grass was shipped in and laid on top of the artificial turf. This led to dry, uneven and unstable playing surfaces that, when watered, would create puddles rather than the short, lush grass expected for top-level football matches. In some areas, these pitches were sticky, causing players' boots to get caught in the turf. In others they gave way, and this inconsistency made these pitches a potential injury risk.

Far more dangerous, though, was the situation that developed outside the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami ahead of the final.

Fans lining up to enter the stadium in the hours before kick-off were met with gate closures, which stadium authorities said were to prevent fans from entering without tickets. Increasingly large numbers of supporters with tickets were then cramped in small areas for hours,

Overwhelming heat...linesman Humberto Panjoj collapses during Peru v Canada

creating unsafe conditions due to both the intense heat and the dangerously confined spaces.

After many fans had been stuck for up to two hours and the situation became increasingly dire, the gates were opened fully to prevent it from becoming even more serious. People were then let in, many without tickets.

A statement from The Hard Rock Stadium read: "Throughout the afternoon and evening, there were numerous attempts by unruly fans without tickets to overpower security and law enforcement personnel at entry points to the stadium, putting themselves, other fans and security and stadium staff at extreme risk.

"Various stadium gates were closed and re-opened strategically in an attempt to allow ticketed guests to enter safely and in a controlled manner. Fans continued to engage in illegal conduct – fighting police officers, breaking down walls and barricades and vandalising the stadium, causing significant damage to the property.

"When it became apparent that it would not be safe to start the match at 8pm, a joint decision was made to postpone. Shortly after 8pm, stadium officials, CONMEBOL, CONCACAF and law enforcement officers communicated and decided to open stadium gates for a short period of time to all fans to prevent stampedes and serious injury at the perimeter.

"The gates were then closed once the threat of fans being crushed was alleviated. At that time, the venue was at capacity and gates were not re-opened." As a result, some fans with tickets were unable to get in.

CONMEBOL released its own statement a day later: "In this situation, CONMEBOL was subject to the decisions made by the Hard Rock Stadium authorities, according to the contractual responsibilities established for security operations," read part of the statement.

"In addition to the preparations determined in this contract, CONMEBOL recommended to these authorities the procedures proven in events of this magnitude, which were NOT taken into account."

The final, then, was a culmination of issues experienced throughout the tournament, from the treatment of players and teams and disorganised media access, to the most serious incident of all for those supporters attending the final.

Canada coach Jesse Marsch said: "This tournament has not been professional," and that Canada had been "treated like second-class citizens."

Bielsa added: "Training grounds are a disaster. Bolivia had to suspend its training sessions."

Anyone from CONCACAF or the US side of the 2026 World Cup hosting team will point out that the organisation of this Copa America, despite it being on US shores, was the responsibility of CONMEBOL.

But for the US to allow another confederation to control and organise so many aspects of the hosting process, when this tournament was seen by many as a World Cup dress rehearsal, was always going to be a risk.

The United States Soccer Federation stated in its 2024 book of reports that it would receive $10 million for hosting this Copa America. *ESPN* reported that the federation also expected to make an additional $10-15m from its percentage of ticket sales – much less than the $75m it earned from the Copa America Centenario it hosted in 2016. This suggests that US Soccer and CONCACAF had deferred much of the responsibility to CONMEBOL.

"They did press conferences to say that the pitches were perfect, but you can see the grass is poorly bonded"

Uruguay coach Marcelo Bielsa

As the tournament progressed and Argentina took the trophy, off the pitch, those involved with soccer in the United States may have wished they hadn't hosted it at all.

For FIFA, meanwhile, this Copa America served as a useful guide for what not to do in 2026, but Gianni Infantino and Co. will believe that when it comes to the World Cup, its own organisation, pitches and stadium logistics will not encounter the problems seen at this tournament.

FIFA events can be fairly identikit affairs, regardless of where they are held, while these large stadiums in the US have successful experiences of hosting big events such as college football, concerts and sporting events. They will be confident that this Copa is not a sign of things to come at the World Cup. Still, they may be extra vigilant nevertheless.

Eight of the Copa America host stadiums will also be used for the World Cup, four of which have artificial turf and will need grass installed, but that is likely to be done much earlier than it was for the Copa. The most notable of these is the MetLife Stadium, which will host the 2026 World Cup final.

MetLife will be listed as a New York

Crowd trouble... fans of Colombia and Uruguay clash during the semi-final

venue, but it is actually in the Meadowlands area of New Jersey and requires a trip across the Hudson River from New York to get there.

The United States is a country that has a transport system built primarily for road vehicles. Some cities have little to no local train network, while others are not pedestrian-friendly once you get outside the city centres. The scale of these cities can also be deceptively large.

New York, however, has an extensive public transport system. This will have played a part in MetLife being chosen for the final ahead of more modern venues such as those in the host cities of Dallas and Los Angeles (actually in Arlington and Inglewood respectively).

Though its location in New Jersey means it is not directly accessible via New York City's subway system, fans using public transport can take other trains or buses from New York City, with New Jersey Transit used to running special trains from Secaucus Junction to the Meadowlands on matchdays.

Local opinion on the New Jersey trains varies, but those used to the rail network in the UK, or the delays and overcrowding of the Deutsche Bahn in Germany during Euro 2024, will enjoy the relatively regular, large-capacity double-decker trains that take passengers to the stadium gates and run for hours after the final whistle, with the time of the last train clearly stated. The system managed the 80,000+ attendance for the two Argentina games at the Meadowlands with few to no problems.

FIFA is also generally good at making sure guidance and transport are in place from cities to venues, and they will likely work with the host cities to add extra transport as they did at the last comparable-sized World Cup in Russia. Given that most of the stadiums in the US are located outside the host cities they will be advertised as, the comfortable and complimentary shuttling of fans from place to place will be an important logistical consideration.

Another issue with the Copa America was that it was too diluted. Most venues only hosted two games and no venue hosted more than four. There were no bases where several cities reasonably close together were hosting lots of games. It was good that fans from across the country got a small taste of tournament football, but there was not a nationwide tournament feel. This might also be an issue at a World Cup spread across a whole continent, as the 2026 tournament will be, though there will be more groups of host cities, especially on the coasts, and a World Cup can bring with it a tournament feel that a Copa America hosted outside its usual confederation struggled to.

The distance between venues and the small number of games at them meant lots of travel was involved for anyone going to multiple games. Covering the Copa America was an expensive business, but not as expensive as it was for fans. Many events around the world today, sporting or non-sporting, suffer from ticketing issues. Face-value prices are out of reach for many and even for those who can afford them, anything that is in high demand is subject to the scourge of the secondary ticketing markets inflating prices even further.

Many of those locked out of the final in Miami had paid thousands of dollars for tickets. Fair ticket pricing, especially for locals and fans of the teams involved, is another lesson the 2026 World Cup can take from this Copa America.

There was a positive atmosphere locally around matchdays. Diverse groups of fans, including those visiting from South America, locals and tourists, made the games an enjoyable experience. The likes of Venezuela, Canada, Uruguay, Colombia and Argentina entertained those fans at various points during the tournament, and the football provided moments of joy despite the organisational issues.

The stadium in Charlotte will not be used for the World Cup, but looked particularly impressive, though it also had pitch issues and was the scene of a brawl between Uruguay players and Colombia fans after their semi-final, as Uruguay players believed their families were in danger due to poor stadium security.

This tournament provided lessons that should have already been learned. As with the officials bouncing the ball on the pitch after a game had been played to test its responsiveness, by then it was too late.

What happened at this Copa America isn't necessarily a sign of things to come at the 2026 World Cup, but for a tournament that was always going to be seen as a dress rehearsal, the outcome couldn't have been much worse.

Pitch check... Argentina keeper Emiliano Martinez pats down a bump on the MetLife Stadium pitch

eye witness

Steve Menary reports

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

Visas, sickness and unplayable pitches

The challenges of international football in the Caribbean

Antigua & Barbuda's experiences in the second round of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers was a perfect example of the obstacles facing smaller nations. For Mikele Leigertwood's side, the outcome was less than ideal.

On the morning of the opening group game at home to Bermuda, attacker Jalmaro Calvin started feeling sick. By the time the game kicked off, head coach Leigertwood himself was also feeling ill.

With the local floodlights not deemed good enough for international football, the game kicked off at 3pm. Raheem Deterville put the hosts 1-0 up on 26 minutes but the baking Caribbean sun took its toll and Calvin had to be taken off before the break.

Leigertwood rapidly deteriorated too and had to be sick before giving a half-time team-talk. The kit man had to be taken to hospital and as the game resumed, two more players went down with the bug.

"You could see people visibly deteriorating," says Leigertwood, who played in the Premier League as a defensive midfielder for Crystal Palace, Sheffield United and Reading. To his chagrin, Sachiel Ming levelled in added time to claim a point for Bermuda.

Premier League days ...Mikele Leigertwood in action for Reading

Three days later, the team – minus Calvin – travelled to the Cayman Islands, only to encounter more difficulties. A tropical storm had rendered the pitch at the Truman Bodden Sports Complex in George Town unplayable at the time of the scheduled 3:30pm kick off. So, the game was put back until 10am the following day.

"We went back to our hotel rooms and ate," says Deterville. "Then we got a text to say the game was now starting at 9pm that night and we had to be ready to leave in five minutes."

Although the pitch had drained well and was playable, the game was now under floodlights. "We were initially told the kick-off will be 3:30pm as the floodlights were not good enough, but they were so desperate to get the game played that suddenly they were now good enough," adds a frustrated Leigertwood.

"The Caymans were big and strong and quite aggressive, but we felt that if we'd had everyone fit, we would have quite comfortably got six points across the two games."

Instead, Antigua were undone by another stoppage-time goal from Joshua Campbell to give the Caymans all three points.

The reason that FIFA and CONCACAF were so keen to play the game soon became clear, as the Caymans were unable to fulfil their next match away to Cuba. Many of their side are students in North America and were reluctant to travel to Cuba due to the USA's political embargo on the island and the implications for their visas. Two cancelled games would have been poor for the integrity of the qualifiers.

"CONCACAF should be looking at these things," says Leigertwood. "This is something that shouldn't happen."

Born in the UK, he played a dozen times for the island of his mother and would have featured more had the old Caribbean Cup been scheduled in the FIFA international window. After retiring, Leigertwood moved into coaching at Reading, where he runs the Under-18s. He took over at Antigua shortly before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and soon found that eligibility remained a problem.

Antigua has a large diaspora in the UK, many of whom live around the Leicester area, and Leigertwood is able to call on a number of players in the lower reaches of the British game. Goalkeeper Nick Townsend plays in the English fourth tier for Newport County and Aaron Taylor-Sinclair is at Scottish Championship side Airdrieonians, while midfielder TJ Bramble and striker Josh Parker are in England's sixth tier with Welling United and Oxford City respectively.

The problem for Leigertwood, and many other international managers who have recruited players from their diaspora playing in the lower reaches of the professional game overseas, is FIFA's rules.

While clubs at the top end of the game have time off for international

Goalscorer...Raheem Deterville in action against Bermuda

English Harbour... a pitch in Antigua

breaks, clubs lower down are forced to postpone games if they lose a number of players to international call-ups. That becomes even more problematic further down the pyramid, particularly in the semi-professional game.

Leigertwood explains: "Recruitment is challenging. A lot is by word of mouth. Players at the lower level will not have their games called off for the international break and their coaches may say: 'You're not getting paid or you won't get back in the team if you go.'

"It's really disappointing. I get it and if I was coaching a bigger nation, then it wouldn't be so much of an issue, but I got it as a player. People would say: 'Oh, you're going on holiday,' and I would say: 'No, I'm going to play for my country.'

"I want players that are interested in doing the best for the team and their country."

Recruiting from the diaspora is common across the Caribbean but Leigertwood's side features far more local players than the likes of Montserrat, for example. His team is led by the veteran winger and full-back Quinton Griffith, who is the last player still in the international set-up to be involved with Antigua's brief foray into running a professional side, Antigua Barracuda.

The Barracudas were set up by the late Antigua & Barbuda Football Association secretary and former Caribbean Football Union president, Gordon "Banks" Derrick. The club played from 2011 to 2013 in the United Soccer League (the US third tier) and were based at the Stanford Cricket Stadium – or the Sticky Wicket, as locals term the ground – which was built by US entrepreneur Allen Stanford, who was based in Antigua and a big sponsor of sport.

The Barracudas started positively and helped propel the national side into FIFA's Top 100 and the third round of the 2014 World Cup qualifiers, but the experiment fizzled out. In 2012, Stanford was jailed in the USA for 110 years for his part in a massive Ponzi scheme.

The Barracudas left the stadium and were forced to play their third USL season based in North America. After 26 losses in 26 games, the Barracudas were dissolved at the start of 2014 and are now a distant memory. Griffith had impressed though, and went on to spend five more years in the USL playing for Charlestown Battery before returning home in 2018 to play for Five Islands in the north of Antigua.

> "People would say: 'Oh, you're going on holiday,' and I would say: 'No, I'm going to play for my country'"
>
> **Mikele Leigertwood on representing Antigua & Barbuda**

Players in Antigua do get paid, but no-one is professional. Deterville, for example, works in landscaping at a hotel when not playing for Old Road, one of three clubs that dominate the Antiguan Premier Division along with Grenades and All Saints United. After recruiting a number of players from 2023 champions Grenades, All Saints took the latest title back in May.

Some players from elsewhere in the Caribbean, such as Cuba, Grenada and Jamaica, also play. Accommodation and food is provided but playing in the 16-team Premier Division is not a lucrative business.

Most clubs have their own pitches, but the standard of the fields and facilities in places such as English Harbour and Freeman's Village are variable at best, and the league is now played at the ABFA Technical Centre at Piggotts. League matches are played consecutively across Saturday and Sunday with tickets costing $10 Eastern Caribbean for adults and $5 for juniors.

Games had been played at the historic Antigua Recreation Ground (ARG) in St John's, where West Indies cricket legend Brian Lara twice set world-record scores. The ground was replaced as the island's main cricket venue by the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound, which was built using Chinese government money for the 2007 Cricket World Cup, opening up the ARG for football.

Thousands of people attended some big matches but the ARG has not hosted football since the outbreak of COVID-19. "Pitch-wise the Technical Centre is better, but for the fans and the atmosphere the ARG is better," says Deterville, who is one of the few local based players to have played overseas.

Defender Vashami Allen played briefly in the TT Pro League in Trinidad & Tobago for Central FC in 2017, when forward Javorn Stevens also had a short spell in the reserves at Seattle Sounders. Deterville played for the Under-19s at current English Premier League side Brentford between 2018-20, and in 2022 was one of six Antiguans to spend a season at Spanish fifth-tier side La Albatalia. The players returned home due to visa problems and only Deterville has pushed on to claim a place in Leigertwood's starting XI.

Outside of the UK-based contingent, young striker D'Andre Bishop is now the only player from the island playing professionally. After a brief spell at FC Monchengladbach in Germany in 2021, Bishop joined Croatian third-tier side Belisce and led the line in the opening World Cup qualifiers.

Those games did not produce the hoped-for results. With the next qualifiers – home to Cuba and away to Honduras – not until June 2025, Leigertwood has plenty of time to prepare and will hope for better luck than in the opening games.

Goalkeeper...Nick Townsend in action for Newport County

'LIKE GOING FROM CANDLES TO ELECTRICITY'

How AI is transforming recruitment in football

Words: Ryan Baldi

When it comes to the art of identifying and developing the best football talent from around the globe, few clubs boast a track record over the past two decades to compare with Sevilla's.

Dating back to a rudimentary yet extensive spread sheet of performance data on potential signings compiled by former sporting director Monchi (now of Aston Villa) in the early 2000s, the Andalusian club's unparalleled seven Europa League triumphs have been built on the strength of their scouting. Players such as Dani Alves, Ivan Rakitic and Jules Kounde were unearthed, nurtured and then sold at great profit.

So, the fact that Sevilla are now utilising artificial intelligence (AI) to maximise their scouting operation suggests the technology has truly arrived in football.

"Sevilla is well known for scouting processes," says Elias Zamora, Sevilla's chief data officer. "The key vision behind our scouting methodology was to send a scout to get information on players nobody had information about.

"We used to send scouts to places no other teams were going. But then this became a trend. So now, even if we discover talent, other teams who have more money will get them. The question was: what do we do? How do we change the paradigm?"

The answer was to team up with IBM, using the technology company's WatsonX generative AI platform, to create a bespoke product not to make Sevilla's talent search more exhaustive, but to make it more efficient. That product, Scout Advisor, essentially makes their hundreds of thousands of scout reports more readily searchable and easier to combine with key performance data.

"We approached Sevilla not just because they are a great team in Europe, we approached Sevilla because we understand they are doing great things with data," says IBM client manager Arturo Guerrero. "We wanted to be part of that."

"We had one of the most evolved data departments in Europe, with data scientists, data engineers, web developers," Zamora says. "Our database has two key essential forms of information: ratings from zero to ten for a player in a given match, and a deep description of how this player played. You could be a No.10 playing as a mobile centre-forward, or you could be a No.10 playing as a reference centre-forward – it's different. The question was: how will we process which kind of No.10 we are looking for? We needed to extract the semantics, the meaning, of what is inside the textual report.

"Now, we are able to be more precise in the search for players. We can search for certain characteristics described by our scouts in natural language. We can combine quantitative and qualitative

approaches. If you have better information, you can make better decisions."

AI is not only helping clubs find players, either. It is also helping players be found.

Eyeball, a subscription-based video and statistics service covering youth football in 23 countries, counts several Premier League clubs as clients, as well as elite sides throughout Europe and even top agencies and sports brands – all of whom have the same goal: to find football's next big thing.

With whole-pitch videos of thousands of youth matches, Eyeball uses AI to generate statistics for every player.

"We've identified 48 actions that happen on a pitch – dribbles, take-ons, shots on goal and so on," says Eyeball director David Hicks. "We've taught the AI how to identify them from video. And then scouts can search through our data filter and get a list of players that are the top ten per cent achievers across the parameters they set."

Powered by investment from Founderment, a Danish venture fund part-owned by the owner of FC Midtjylland, retail billionaire Anders Holch Povlsen, Eyeball's coverage is expanding. By the end of the year, they intend to offer clients access to youth matches from every EU nation, doubling their player database to 300,000, before moving into Brazil and North Africa.

Recruitment specialists...Ivan Rakitic lifts Sevilla's seventh Europa League trophy

Technology partner ...IBM created a bespoke recruitment system for Sevilla

"Scouts need to be at games," Hicks says, "but a scout can only be at one pitch at a time. Eyeball lets you go and see the game on a Saturday, then go home and watch 20 games.

"Our catchphrase is: 'talent is everywhere'. It's not all in south Croydon or the suburbs of Paris. What if I'm growing up [in Croatia] and I'm the next Luka Modric but I didn't get scouted? People realise that now. That's what AI is allowing us to do."

Some agents are also using AI to present their players to prospective clubs. Guy Branston was the loans manager at Leicester City before setting up his own football agency. He has found open-source AI tools such as Gemini and ChatGPT invaluable in both roles.

"Being an agent, you're a marketer, a negotiator, a coach, a mentor, a consultant, a broker," Branston says.

Scouting expert...former Sevilla sporting director Monchi

"You can use AI to help with techniques and prompts to improve in those areas. You can use it to target clubs, to understand what they need, what type of players they're looking for.

"I started to use it when I was the loans manager at Leicester. I'd probably write ten to 15 scouting reports on a Sunday, and I was able to do that within a few hours using AI. It was like having an assistant. Since I've had my agency, it's really helped me. I'm on it every day."

One of the biggest fears surrounding AI's creep into any industry is its effect on job security. In football, many traditional scouts have long felt marginalised by so-called "laptop gurus", with a growing sense that data analytics is rendering the trained eye of the pitchside talent spotter redundant. Zamora believes the advent of AI in football only empowers scouts.

"In the past, the classical dilemma was: I am a data-driven scout or I am a traditional, qualitative opinion-driven scout," he explains. "We know the data-driven method is not fully right, and the traditional scout is not fully right. But if we combine both of them, it's fully right."

"There are a lot of detractors of AI in football," adds Guerrero. "They think it means football people with 20, 30 years' experience of watching games in the mud will be eliminated from the equation. But we are giving more capabilities to them.

"The head of scouting was supporter number one. He said: 'This is like going from candles to electricity – 300 hours of my team's work will be transformed into minutes now.' You cannot say AI is here to replace scouts. It's nonsense to anyone who understands the purpose of it."

> "What if I'm growing up [in Croatia] and I'm the next Luka Modric but I didn't get scouted? People realise that now. That's what AI is allowing us to do"
>
> Eyeball director David Hicks

That's an argument that not everyone within the game is buying, though. Harry Varley, an African-based scout for Belgian club Gent, believes that football's rush to embrace AI is only fuelling a quest for improvement in the wrong areas.

"Yes, data is helpful," he says, "but you start to drown in it if you don't have a clear eye for what you're looking for. The football industry still doesn't take recruitment seriously. There's too much talk about what people are doing. You can use any AI tool you want, but integration from the top level through to the technical level and then to recruitment, it's not there.

"AI can make things more efficient, but why do you need so many reports in the first place? If you have structure to your process and an integrated vision as a club, you won't need so many reports."

And with tech companies offering a plethora of AI-based services, Gregg Britton, an experienced scout and UEFA A Licence coach, feels more time and scrutiny is needed to determine which ones add value and which don't.

"AI in football is here to stay, but it has to be refined," Britton says. "There are a lot of different companies doing different things with AI. You have to find what works and use it in conjunction with the old-fashioned eye test.

"I think it's a good thing for football, but it needs to be put in the right hands and we need to think objectively about what works."

As the American computer scientist John McCarthy, who originally coined the term "artificial intelligence", once said: "As soon as it works, no one calls it AI any more." Football is still in the early stages of its relationship with the technology. Dozens of new products professing to streamline scouting are still bunched beneath the AI umbrella while the game figures out what to keep and what to discard.

The computers haven't taken over yet, but they're at the gate.

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STEVE MENARY

New Zealand take another Oceania title

While the All Whites retained the OFC Nations Cup with ease as expected, the tournament itself proved anything but predictable

Oceania champions... New Zealand in action earlier this year

With the last OFC Nations Cup in New Zealand in 2020 cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the All Whites had to wait eight years to defend the title that they won in Papua New Guinea in 2016.

New Zealand had been due to host the 2020 edition but this year's Nations Cup was awarded to Vanuatu at the end of 2023. The original plan was to host games at two different venues, Port Vila and Luganville, but subsequent uncertainty over Air Vanuatu's flight schedules led to the latter being replaced by Fijian capital Suva. As a result, for the first time in its history, the tournament was played in two countries.

Vanuatu remained as hosts for Group A, but this was reduced to just three teams at the start of June by the withdrawal of New Caledonia due to ongoing political unrest on the French collective. This was a blow for the Oceania Football Confederation (OFC), as New Caledonia had won gold at the 2023 Pacific Games football tournament, but their withdrawal opened up the field.

With New Caledonia gone, Group A in Port Vila saw the co-hosts competing with the Solomon Islands for second place behind favourites, New Zealand. With the first game cancelled, Vanuatu's match with the Solomon Islands on

June 15 was both the tournament's opener and the group's decisive game. A crowd of 5,000 at the VFF Freshwater Stadium saw Galaxy striker Kensi Tangis score the only goal on 72 minutes.

The Solomon Islands could only stay in the tournament by beating New Zealand three days later, but the All Whites romped home 3-0 with Plymouth Argyle's Ben Waine – leading the line in the absence of captain Chris Wood, who missed the finals due to his wedding – scoring a brace.

Player of the Tournament...New Zealand left-back Liberato Cacace

Vanuatu were already guaranteed a semi-final pace when they took on New Zealand on June 21. A 7,200 crowd crammed the Freshwater Stadium to see if the hosts could match the holders, but a 4-0 hammering for Juliano Schmeling's side was a sobering antidote to any title aspirations.

In Group B, Fiji made the semi-finals as they romped past Papua New Guinea 5-1 in the first game, while Tahiti beat Samoa 2-0 with goals from Le Havre right-back-slash-right-winger Mateo Degrumelle and the experienced Teaonui Tehau.

PNG had been losing finalists back in 2016 and Warren Moon's side put in an improved showing in their second game on June 19 with Tahiti. Degrumelle scored again but Samuel Garcia's side were held 1-1. In contrast, Rob Sherman's co-hosts were only getting started and crushed Samoa 9-1 with veteran skipper Roy Krishna adding two more goals after also netting in their opening win.

> **For the first time in its history, the tournament was played in two countries**

This set up a decisive showdown on June 22 at the HFC Bank Stadium between Fiji and Tahiti with the winners taking top spot and avoiding a semi-final with the holders, New Zealand. The two sides could only be separated by a penalty from Krishna, with Fiji advancing to a semi-final on June 27 with fellow co-hosts Vanuatu, while Tahiti's defeat meant a match-up with Darren Bazeley's Kiwis.

Despite being forced to share hosting by the OFC, Vanuatu held on to the right to stage both semi-finals in Port Vila. Twice semi-finalists previously, in 2000 and 2002, Schmeling's team had an extra day to recover compared to their opponents but went into the game on the back of a humiliating defeat, while Fiji's confidence was boosted by beating 2016 champions Tahiti.

Top goalscorer...Fiji icon Roy Krishna

Home advantage helped Vanuatu, and Jonathan Spokeyjack put the hosts ahead early on. Tahiti's Sitiveni Cavuilagi equalised at the start of the second half but Jason Thomas, who had previously played in PNG for Hekari United, put Vanuatu back in front 11 minutes later and Schmeling's side held on to make their first Nations Cup final.

While Vanuatu's debut final appearance may have been a surprise, the identity of their opponents were not as the Kiwis pummelled Tahiti 5-0 with Waine scoring another brace along with veteran Kosta Barbarouses.

The tournament's biggest crowd of 10,000 people in Port Vila saw the hosts immediately on the back foot with Cam Howieson scoring after two minutes from the edge of the box.

The All Whites controlled the game without creating another significant chance, but Vanuatu's chances took a hit when Timothy Boulet was sent off for a second yellow card 15 minutes before time. With Vanuatu chasing an equaliser, New Zealand hit the hosts on the break and Jesse Randall finally added a second on 83 minutes. His Auckland FC team-mate Max Mata finished the game off with a third in stoppage-time to give New Zealand a sixth Nations Cup triumph.

Unsurprisingly, the All Whites led the individual awards, with left-back and captain Liberato Cacace named Player of the Tournament and goalkeeper Max Crocombe collecting the Golden Glove, although Krishna's five goals were enough to claim the Golden Boot.

Colombia

CARL WORSWICK

Shootout hero ...Bucaramanga keeper Aldair Quintana

Historic title... Rafael Dudamel leads the Atletico Bucaramanga celebrations

Winning in the rain

Atletico Bucaramanga seal their first-ever title in Colombian Apertura after rain-soaked final

It had been a long and agonising wait. For generations of supporters spanning the club's 75-year history, Atletico Bucaramanga had delivered very little. Two second-division titles and a runners-up spot in the 1997 league were scant reward for a team considered one of Colombia's most historic. Yet this summer, their moment finally arrived.

Having won the home leg of the Apertura final 1-0, Bucaramanga then squandered a two-goal cushion late in the return fixture as opponents Santa Fe forced penalties in the dying minutes. But with the momentum swinging against them, goalkeeper Aldair Quintana stepped up to save two penalty kicks and cement his place in the club's history. The years of despair and mediocrity had been broken; Atletico Bucaramanga were Colombian champions at last.

On the touchline, manager Rafael Dudamel rocked gently from side to side in a tight hug with his assistant. His face buried in the coach's neck, the tears began to pour. The Venezuelan had achieved something in his six months in charge that no previous Bucaramanga manager had ever managed. Having competed in the second-ever Colombian league tournament organised in 1949, Bucaramanga had been the only team among the country's 14 historic sides to have never won a league title.

Upon taking over in December 2023, Dudamel had little time to build a squad before the new season started. The 51-year-old coach instead opted for a Moneyball strategy of signing players who had flopped at their previous clubs and whose value had crashed. In came a flurry of loan signings and freebies.

"In one of my first conversations with my players, I told them: 'Look, things didn't work out at your last club, but that's something we both have in common,'" Dudamel told journalist Patricia Janiot. "I think that conversation was key. From then on we were walking along the same path together."

Dudamel had just been sacked by Mexican side Necaxa, where the club had sold their star players and expected the Venezuelan to pick up the pieces. The former goalkeeper thus chose to return to Colombia where his name still shone brightly after a league title win with Deportivo Cali in 2021. But now he had a point to prove.

Few people gave Bucaramanga much hope at the start of the season. A top-eight finish to qualify for the league semi-finals was about as optimistic as it got. Yet Dudamel's unfancied hotchpotch side gelled immediately and they topped the league to qualify for the second group-stage round. Confidence and hope grew. For the first time in years, home games were regularly sold out.

They then finished top of a tough group containing Colombia's last three champions (Junior, Millonarios and Deportivo Pereira) to book their place in the final. The winner of the other group, Santa Fe (who finished above Tolima, Once Caldas and La Equidad) awaited.

Winger Fredy Hinestroza gave Bucaramanga a 1-0 advantage in the first leg, but early in the return tie,

Atletico Bucaramanga had been the only team among the country's 14 historic sides to have never won a league title

former Wigan Athletic striker Hugo Rodallega restored parity. As the rain lashed down, it was Bucaramanga that adjusted better to the boggy conditions, scoring twice either side of half-time to take control of the tie. Yet, with six minutes left and almost every neutral across the country willing them on, Bucaramanga collapsed and conceded twice in a matter of minutes.

But another plot twist was still to come, as Julian Millan and Agustin Rodriguez, the scorers of Santa Fe's two late goals, both went on to see their spot-kicks saved by Quintana.

"I honestly never thought I'd see this day because I'm just so used to seeing us in ruins, or in the second division, or failing like we always did," admitted journalist Jotas Mantilla, who broke down in tears live on *RCN Radio* while narrating his team's dramatic win. "But we were the best team over the whole tournament and this time we did it."

Thousands of supporters lined the streets and piled into the stadium for the victory parade when Bucaramanga returned home the following day. In the euphoria, one fan took things too far by snatching centre-back Carlos Henao's winners' medal from around his neck. "He's very sorry," his dad told radio the following day after the medal was returned. "He was very drunk."

Player of the Year...Hugo Rodallega

Bucaramanga's title win was also felt beyond football. As the home to tens of thousands of Venezuelans who have spilled over the nearby border in recent years following the country's economic meltdown, Colombia's sixth-biggest city now had a potent antidote to fire at the xenophobic forces that had sought to blame the migrant population for the region's problems. Dudamel was even handed the keys to the city in recognition of his achievements.

Building on their success won't be easy. Bucaros' top two scorers in their title-winning season have already departed, while Colombia's biggest clubs have responded with a couple of eye-catching signings. Colombia's all-time most capped player, goalkeeper David Ospina, has rejoined Atletico Nacional, 16 years since departing the club, while Millonarios have pulled off one of the biggest coups in recent history, enticing national team record scorer Radamel Falcao to join them after 24 years abroad.

Bucaramanga and Dudamel will again be up against the odds to retain their title. But, for now at least, they can bask in ending their 75-year-long wait.

SEASON'S BEST

PLAYER OF THE SEASON
Hugo RODALLEGA (Santa Fe)
Santa Fe's talisman finished the Apertura as joint-top scorer alongside ex-Colombia and Sevilla marksman Carlos Bacca of Junior, and later claimed he deserved a recall to the Colombia squad at the ripe old age of 38.

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR
Juan Jose CORDOBA (Deportivo Cali)
Explosive winger who fired six goals for cash-strapped Cali this season. Powerful and direct, the 21-year-old has attracted interest from MLS and Brazil with AEK Athens already having had a €2m bid rejected.

COACH OF THE SEASON
Rafael DUDAMEL (Bucaramanga)
Became the first Venezuelan to play in a Copa Libertadores final as Deportivo Cali's goalie, then won the league as their manager before leading Bucaramanga to their first-ever title this season.

Asia

JOHN DUERDEN

A new tournament is born

The first edition of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Club Championship will kick off in August

The football landscape in South Asia has been in flux of late. India have been without a national team coach since June, with Igor Stimac dismissed after a dismal Asian Cup campaign followed by early elimination from 2026 World Cup qualification, while Pakistan have been without a functioning league and federation since 2020. Not only that, but the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) – one of five regional subsidiaries of the Asian Football Confederation alongside West, Central, East and South East – has been unhappy with the Maldives Football Association not coughing up money owed after hosting the 2021 SAFF Championship.

That usually biennial competition is for national teams, but now the SAFF needs a cash boost as it is set to launch its first-ever club championship.

The SAFF Club Championship kicks off in August, and will see eight teams from the body's seven member-countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) play in a home-and-away elimination format. No groups, no dead rubbers, just knockout action right from the get go.

There is no surprise as to which country has two entrants: India dominates the region in many fields and is the highest-ranked nation. FIFA sees the world's most populous country as a crucial market and the same is true of South Asia too. If India can thrive, then all should be able to find a way to benefit; that is the theory at least.

It will be no surprise, then, if one of the two Indian Super League (ISL) teams end up lifting the trophy. Mumbai City and Goa have both been past winners of the ISL and have appeared in the Asian Champions League.

Favourites... Mumbai City in last season's AFC Champions League

SAFF Championship... India v Pakistan in the 2023 tournament

ABOVE RIGHT: Tournament architect...SAFF president Kazi Salahuddin with Gianni Infantino

Mumbai, part of the City Football Group, finished second last season with Goa, winners in 2020, in third. ISL winners Mohun Bagan will instead play in the AFC Champions League Two.

While Mumbai and Goa are the favourites by some distance, there are some other famous names in the tournament and there may be special interest in Bangladesh. In recent years, the country's football scene has been dominated by a new club, Bashundhara Kings, but in this competition Bangladesh will be represented by one of its oldest and most historic clubs: Mohammedan. With no title since 2002, the club's glory days have slipped away, but this tournament gives them the chance to return to international competition.

The Dhaka side will be cheered on by Kazi Salahuddin. The former Bangladesh international has been head of the SAFF since 2009 and has been pushing for a club championship for years.

"My dream was to get this started," said Salahuddin when it was all announced in 2023. "This tournament will help football develop in the region and we all hope that it will prove to be exciting for fans. The details are still to be fixed but we are all excited about it."

> The SAFF Club Championship kicks off in August, and will see eight teams from the body's seven member-countries play

Nepal have struggled in the international arena but will be represented by Machhindra, the Kathmandu club that has been their country's champions twice in recent years. Eagles are the entrants from the Maldives after coming second in the national league. Sri Lankan fans can get behind Blue Star while Bhutan are sending champions Paro.

There are two major questions. First: what, if anything, will Pakistan do? At the time of writing, no team has been nominated. The Pakistan Premier League has not had a proper season since 2019 and there are all kinds of issues in the country's football scene. Five years ago, FIFA appointed a Normalisation Committee to hold new elections for the federation, but not much has happened since.

And then there is the issue of how much interest there will actually be. The SAFF Championship, which consists of national teams only, has had its moments – not least when Afghanistan won in 2013 to spark celebrations in the country, which has since left to join Central Asia. There have been some decent crowds, but the competition has yet to become a much-loved fixture in the football calendar and in the last event in India in 2023, the average attendance struggled to get much past 6,000.

Perhaps the format will make a difference and get fans on board. It should be a short but sweet tournament that could offer something different to football lovers in the region. Most nations don't get much of a chance in the Asian Champions League so the opportunity to play competitive international football should be enough of a novelty to make a difference.

THE TEAMS

- Mumbai City
- Goa
- Blue Star
- Machhindra
- Eagles
- Paro
- Mohammedan
- TBC

United States & Canada

JAMES NALTON

Battle of the leagues

For the second time in its short history, the Leagues Cup takes place in an expanded format involving all teams from the United States' MLS and Mexico's LigaMX

As the sides from North America's two most prominent leagues (the United States' Major League Soccer and Mexico's LigaMX) get set to face off against each other, this is not just a battle between the individual clubs – it is also one between the leagues themselves.

Last year's edition remains the only title Lionel Messi has won since moving to the United States, and was where much of the buzz around his arrival at Inter Miami was centred. The timing was such that it almost felt like it was set up just for Messi, and no doubt there will be a heavy focus on the Argentine No.10 again this year.

First played in 2019, and then again in 2021, with just four teams from each league, the Leagues Cup tournament has grown into one that, in 2024, will involve 47 teams and take an entire month to complete. There are 15 groups of three teams of which two will progress to a knockout stage.

Reigning MLS Cup champions Columbus Crew and Club America,

Into the last 32... LigaMX Clausura champions Club America get a bye

Last year's Leagues Cup champions... Inter Miami

the team with the best aggregate points total across the 2023 LigaMX Clausura and Apertura, get a bye to the knockout rounds. This advantage means both will be among the favourites. Club America also enter the tournament on a high having just won the 2023-24 LigaMX Clausura play-offs.

Once again, the Leagues Cup will be played in its entirety in the United States and Canada, and mostly at the home grounds of the MLS teams involved. This year, however, the top four highest-seeded Mexican clubs will be granted what the tournament organisers have dubbed "hub privileges", playing games in the same location or at least in the same state. The higher the seed, the longer the privilege lasts. Club America will remain at their hub until the semi-finals should they make it that far, Monterrey until the last 16, Guadalajara (aka Chivas) until the last 32, and the fourth-seeded Mexican side, Tigres UANL, until the end of the group stage.

When it comes to the major continental tournament in this region, the CONCACAF Champions Cup, the biggest test for MLS teams is getting results from away games in Mexico, but this particular test is not part of the Leagues Cup – at least not for now.

The hub privileges for some Mexican teams are seen as a way to reward the top LigaMX sides with less travel and more of a stable base in the tournament, but it is no substitute for the benefits gained from playing at home, so this league-v-league tournament remains favourable to MLS.

There is also expected to be some opposition to this year's Leagues Cup on the back of the way that MLS has treated the United States' version of the FA Cup, the US Open Cup. MLS withdrew 18 of its 26 US-based teams from the 110-year-old domestic cup competition this season, including Messi's Inter Miami. Part of the reason given was schedule congestion, which saw fingers pointed at the Leagues Cup – a newly invented competition that takes a whole month to complete and adds considerable workload for players in the middle of the season.

It was seen as the league abandoning an historic tournament – the Open Cup, which includes all of US soccer, from semi-pro and amateur to professional teams – in favour of one that is new, not open for qualification, and, some would argue, unnecessary.

The Leagues Cup tournament has grown into one that, in 2024, will involve 47 teams and take an entire month to complete

MLS champions... Columbus Crew's head coach Wilfried Nancy

On top of these issues, Canadian Premier League sides may feel aggrieved at being left out of the Leagues Cup, especially as it offers an additional path to Champions Cup qualification for those involved.

Though there is likely to be some dissent off the pitch, on the pitch there is no doubt that the Leagues Cup, once underway, offers some intriguing match-ups. International club football is innately entertaining whatever form it takes.

It also contributes to the ongoing MLS v LigaMX narrative. MLS has long seen its teams' performance against Mexican opposition as a measure of the league's progress, while LigaMX looks to maintain its dominance and rubbish suggestions that MLS is catching it.

At the beginning of June, Mexico triumphed in what is seen as the true test of regional dominance when Pachuca won the Champions Cup final against Columbus Crew, but LigaMX failed to make a mark on the Leagues Cup last year. Fans of Mexican teams rightly pointed out that their teams are disadvantaged due to having no home games, but will nevertheless have been disappointed in their performance. The 2023 edition saw an all-MLS final between Inter Miami and Nashville SC, while Philadelphia Union won the third-place game against Monterrey, meaning all three available Champions Cup qualification spots were claimed by MLS sides.

Even when playing all their games in the US, Mexican teams expect to win, so anything less than a LigaMX team in the final in 2024 will be seen as a disappointment.

From whichever angle this Leagues Cup is viewed, there are points to prove and statements to be made, and it is against this backdrop that the latest MLS/LigaMX bonanza will take place.

THE DRAW

WEST 1
- Monterrey
- Pumas UNAM
- Austin FC

WEST 2
- Guadalajara
- San Jose Earthquakes
- LA Galaxy

WEST 3
- St. Louis City
- FC Dallas
- Juarez

WEST 4
- Toluca
- Sporting Kansas City
- Chicago Fire

WEST 5
- Leon
- Portland Timbers
- Colorado Rapids

WEST 6
- Seattle Sounders
- Minnesota United
- Necaxa

WEST 7
- Los Angeles FC
- Vancouver Whitecaps
- Tijuana

WEST 8
- Houston Dynamo
- Real Salt Lake
- Atlas

EAST 1
- FC Cincinnati
- New York City FC
- Queretaro

EAST 2
- Orlando City
- Atletico San Luis
- CF Montreal

EAST 3
- Tigres UANL
- Puebla
- Inter Miami

EAST 4
- Philadelphia Union
- Charlotte FC
- Cruz Azul

EAST 5
- New England Revolution
- Nashville SC
- Mazatlan

EAST 6
- Pachuca
- New York Red Bulls
- Toronto FC

EAST 7
- Atlanta United
- Santos Laguna
- D.C. United

**Columbus Crew (Major League Soccer) and Club America (LigaMX) receive byes to the round of 32*

Nepal

STEVE MENARY

Aldershot trip... Nepal and England C players ahead of their meeting in May
Credit: Ian Morsman

Operation rebuild

After initial World Cup progress, Nepal were forced to completely rebuild their team

The 2026 World Cup qualifiers proved a tough ordeal for Nepal. After being held 1-1 by Laos in Kathmandu in the qualifying round, Nepal put on a superb showing to win the away leg 1-0 in Vientiane courtesy of a goal from Manish Dangi and qualify for the group stage.

Home and away games against Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen would have been a great experience for the squad – particularly the 2-2 draw with Yemen in neutral Saudi Arabia in their final game, their only point of the group – but many of the players left and only one of the home games was played in Nepal.

"Many people have left the country because of the economic problems and we have had to come up with nearly a whole new team," explains head coach Vincenzo Alberto Annese.

Captain and goalkeeper Kiran Chemjong, who has over 100 caps and plays professionally in India, remained, as did Nepal's other veteran professional, Rohit Chand, who plays in Indonesia for Persik Kediri. But for many others, working in manual trades in Australia proved more of an attraction than trying to make a living from football in Nepal.

Annese adds: "There is a league, the Gold Cup, but the last league game was in June 2023. There was a Super Cup in November and December but they don't have professional contracts, they just sign before the tournament. It's a sad situation.

"So they left football behind and maybe play at the weekend. It's not possible to bring these players back because they have jobs in manufacturing and they need to protect their job.

"Then FIFA came to look at the stadium and saw the field was not so good and said we had to play two home games in the Middle East."

A crowd of nearly 14,000 in Kathmandu had seen the first home game with Yemen, a 2-0 defeat, but home advantage was conceded for the subsequent game with Bahrain in Riffa, and the final "home" game with the UAE was played in Damman, Saudi Arabia – as was their final "away" game against Yemen, where they won their sole point.

That was the chief reward from their qualifiers, and Annese, who previously worked in club football in India and was head coach for the Belize national team from 2019-2020, must look to the future.

He explains: "We beat Laos and that was an historic result because they are all so young, but we have real quality. When we play the Arab countries, it's always hard. Physicality is maybe a weak point but there is talent in Nepal. My number one target is for these guys to play professionally abroad."

> "Many people have left the country because of the economic problems and we have had to come up with nearly a whole new team"
>
> **Nepal head coach Vincenzo Alberto Annese**

Tough test... Nepal in action in Aldershot
Credit: Ian Morsman

The Nepalese players had a taste of what professional football overseas looks like when Annese's squad travelled to the UK before the final round of World Cup qualifiers for matches against the British Army and the England C team, which is comprised of players from below the Football League.

The matches were played in Aldershot, which is home to the Gurkha Regiment that is made up of Nepalese soldiers. With around 6,000 Nepalese living in the Hampshire town, the second game at Aldershot's Recreation Ground drew thousands. After holding the Army to a goalless draw, Annese's side were outmuscled by England C and lost 2-0.

"It's only England C, but the level of football is much higher than in Asia," adds Annese, who faces a tough task in rebuilding Nepalese football in the face of wider economic forces.

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Following back-to-back review issues of the domestic season and this summer's international tournaments, *World Soccer*'s September 2024 edition looks forward, switching attention to the 2024-25 campaign with a special 116-page bumper edition.

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AUGUST 2-AUGUST 30

Global diary

Games and dates to pencil in for the month ahead

The big kick-offs

On the weekend of August 10, the Dutch Eredivisie, Turkish Super Lig and Portuguese Primeira Liga campaigns all get underway. A week later, the Premier League, Serie A, La Liga and Ligue 1 begin, with Germany's Bundesliga commencing the following week.

Community Shield

August 10 will also see Premier League champions Manchester City take on arch-rivals and FA Cup winners Manchester United in what is a repeat of their cup final meeting in May. Pep Guardiola's side will be looking to avoid a record-equalling fourth Community Shield defeat in a row in what will be the 194th Manchester derby in all competitions.

Re-match ...City and United met in May's FA Cup final

Gold medal matches

The Olympic football tournament semi-finals take place on August 5 (men's) and 6 (women's), with the finals happening on August 9 and 10 respectively, drawing to a close the two-week tournaments in Paris.

Gold medallists...Canada won the women's football tournament in Tokyo three years ago

Summer transfer window

The 2024 summer transfer window closes on August 30 at 11pm UK time in England and 11.30pm in Scotland. The Premier League and Scottish Premiership brought forward Deadline Day to ensure harmonisation with the major leagues in Europe, although the likes of Turkey and Saudi Arabia will remain open longer.

Galactico... will there be a bigger transfer than Mbappe this summer?

5 unmissable matches

- **Barcelona v Real Madrid, August 4**
  New Barcelona head coach Hansi Flick will get his first taste of *El Clasico* in this pre-season clash at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, although Kylian Mbappe will miss out as he recovers from Euro 2024.

Un-friendly...tempers flared at last summer's Stateside *Clasico* between the Spanish giants

- **Tottenham Hotspur v Bayern Munich, August 10**
  Harry Kane returns to his old stomping ground in North London for the first time since his 2023 summer sale. It is the second weekend of back-to-back pre-season friendlies between the two clubs – with the first taking place in Seoul, South Korea – as agreed as part of the England captain's transfer.

- **Real Madrid v Atalanta, August 14**
  Warsaw's National Stadium in Poland will host the 49th edition of the UEFA Super Cup, with European champions Real Madrid facing Europa League winners Atalanta. *Los Blancos* beat the Italians on both their previous head-to-heads in the 2020-21 Champions League group stage.

- **Ipswich Town v Liverpool, August 17**
  The Tractor Boys' first game back in the Premier League since 2002 sees them face the daunting task of taking on Liverpool at Portman Road, which will also be Arne Slot's first league game in charge of the Reds.

- **Bayer Leverkusen v Stuttgart, August 17**
  With Bayer Leverkusen winning both the 2023-24 league and cup, this year's German Supercup will see them take on Bundesliga runners-up Stuttgart. It is the first German Super Cup to feature neither Bayern Munich nor Borussia Dortmund since 1993.

2024 OFC NATIONS CUP

FIJI

GOALKEEPERS

1	Aydin **MUSTAHIB**	(20) 28.05.04	Manurewa (Nzl)
20	Joji **VUAKACA**	(21) 24.03.03	Labasa
22	Isikeli **SEVANAIA**	(21) 11.01.03	Rewa

DEFENDERS

2	Scott **WARA**	(24) 22.09.99	Stalybridge Celtic (Eng)
3	Gabriele **MATANISIGA**	(29) 14.06.95	Wellington Olympic (Nzl)
4	Ivan **KUMAR**	(26) 17.06.97	Rewa
16	Atonio **TUIVUNA**	(29) 20.03.95	Lautoka
17	Filipe **BARAVILALA**	(29) 25.11.94	Navua
18	Lekima **GONERAU**	(34) 08.12.89	Labasa
21	Sterling **VASCONCELLOS**	(19) 19.04.05	Lautoka

MIDFIELDERS

5	Sitiveni **CAVUILAGI**	(29) 26.07.94	Lautoka
6	Thomas **DUNN**	(21) 19.01.03	Navua
7	Mohammed **RAHEEM**	(20) 10.08.03	Ba
8	Setareki **HUGHES**	(29) 08.06.95	Rewa
10	Nabil **BEGG**	(20) 17.03.04	Auckland City (Nzl)
11	Brendan **McMULLEN**	(21) 30.06.02	Stop Out (Nzl)
12	Tevita **WARANAIVALU**	(28) 16.09.95	Rewa
13	Mosese **NABOSE**	(25) 01.07.98	Tailevu Naitasiri
19	Merrill **NAND**	(23) 22.09.00	Suva

FORWARDS

9	Roy **KRISHNA**	(36) 30.08.87	Odisha (Ind)
14	Sairusi **NALAUBU**	(27) 14.12.96	Lautoka
15	Etonia **DOGALAU**	(23) 24.02.01	Ba
23	Rusiate **MATAREREGA**	(31) 17.01.93	Nadi

COACH

Rob **SHERMAN** (Wal)	(63) 21.08.60	

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand's top scorer...forward Ben Waine hit four goals

GOALKEEPERS

1	Max **CROCOMBE**	(30) 12.08.93	Burton Albion (Eng)
12	Alex **PAULSEN**	(21) 04.07.02	Bournemouth (Eng)
22	Oliver **SAIL**	(28) 13.01.96	Perth Glory (Aus)

DEFENDERS

2	Tim **PAYNE**	(30) 10.01.94	Wellington Phoenix
3	Lukas **KELLY-HEALD**	(19) 18.05.05	Wellington Phoenix
4	Tyler **BINDON**	(19) 27.01.05	Reading (Eng)
5	Finn **SURMAN**	(20) 23.09.03	Wellington Phoenix
13	Liberato **CACACE**	(23) 27.09.00	Empoli (Ita)
15	Tommy **SMITH**	(34) 31.03.90	Macarthur (Aus)
16	Sam **SUTTON**	(22) 10.12.01	Wellington Phoenix

MIDFIELDERS

6	Cameron **HOWIESON**	(29) 22.12.94	Auckland City
8	Alex **RUFER**	(28) 12.06.96	Wellington Phoenix
11	Elijah **JUST**	(24) 01.05.00	Horsens (Den)
14	Ben **OLD**	(21) 13.08.02	Wellington Phoenix
20	Fin **CONCHIE**	(20) 10.08.03	Wellington Phoenix

FORWARDS

7	Kosta **BARBAROUSES**	(34) 19.02.90	Wellington Phoenix
9	Ben **WAINE**	(23) 11.06.01	Plymouth Argyle (Eng)
17	Alex **GREIVE**	(25) 13.05.99	Dundee United (Sco)
18	Oskar **VAN HATTUM**	(22) 14.04.02	Wellington Phoenix
19	Jesse **RANDALL**	(21) 19.08.02	Wellington Olympic
21	Max **MATA**	(21) 10.07.02	Auckland FC

COACH

Darren **BAZELEY** (Eng)	(51) 05.10.72	

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Dave **TOMARE**	(27) 26.04.97	Hekari United
27	Vagi **KONIEL**	(27) 26.10.96	Southern Strikers
28	Ronald **WARISAN**	(34) 20.09.89	Lae City

DEFENDERS

2	Daniel **JOE**	(34) 29.05.90	Hekari United
3	Godfrey **HARO**	(25) 30.06.98	Hekari United
4	Alwin **KOMOLONG**	(29) 02.11.94	Queensland Lions (Aus)
5	Felix **KOMOLONG**	(27) 06.03.97	Lae City
15	Arol **TATENG**	(27) 05.04.97	Southern Strikers
20	Lennard **ATTERWELL**	(18) 21.11.05	Alcochetense (Por)
26	Raymon **DIHO**	(17) 25.06.06	North Geelong Warriors (Aus)

MIDFIELDERS

7	Jethro **YUMANGE**	(22) 10.03.02	River Light (USA)
8	Lee-Navu **FAUNT**	(21) 04.05.03	Redlands United (Aus)
11	Yagi **YASASA**	(23) 17.08.00	Hekari United
14	Emmanuel **SIMON**	(31) 25.12.92	Lae City
16	Pala **PAUL**	(24) 25.07.99	Southern Strikers
17	Kenneth **ARAH**	(28) 15.01.96	Gulf Komara
18	Bruce **TIAMPO**	(21) 25.07.02	Lae City
21	Troy **DOBBIN**	(22) 24.09.01	Queensland Lions (Aus)
25	Solomon **RANI**	(22) 22.05.02	Hekari United

FORWARDS

6	Ati **KEPO**	(28) 15.01.96	Hekari United
10	Kolu **KEPO**	(30) 15.07.93	Hekari United
12	Matu **BEN**	(16) 31.01.08	Lae City
13	Tommy **SEMMY**	(29) 30.09.94	Melbourne Knights (Aus)

COACH

Warren **MOON** (Aus)	(42) 27.05.82	

SAMOA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Joel **BARTLEY**	(19) 13.04.05	Sydney United (Aus)
22	Kirk **AUVELE**	(18) 10.06.06	Vaivase-Tai
23	Paul **TAUPAU**	(23) 31.01.01	Franklin United (Nzl)

DEFENDERS

2	Luke **TOLO-KENT**	(21) 29.04.03	Miramar Rangers (Nzl)
3	Luke **SALISBURY**	(19) 15.09.04	Roslyn-Wakari (Nzl)
4	Taine **WILSON**	(19) 08.11.04	Nelson Suburbs (Nzl)
6	Andrew **SETEFANO**	(36) 10.08.87	Lupe o le Soaga
12	Harry **CHOTE**	(24) 04.11.99	Miramar Rangers (Nzl)
15	Niko **STEINMETZ**	(24) 20.04.00	Western Springs (Nzl)
17	Faitalia **HAMILTON-PAMA**	(24) 20.04.00	Western Springs (Nzl)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Kaleb **DE GROOT-GREEN**	(22) 11.05.02	Christchurch United (Nzl)
8	Jarvis **VAAI**	(21) 20.04.03	Lupe o le Soaga
13	Jesse **VINE**	(21) 23.01.03	Kemps Creek United (Aus)
14	Dauntae **MARINER**	(24) 25.01.00	Nelson Suburbs (Nzl)
16	Caleb **HILBRON**	(30) 14.10.93	Island Bay United (Nzl)
19	Alex **MALAUULU**	(18) 12.03.06	San Jorge (Arg)

FORWARDS

7	Darcy **KNIGHT**	(24) 18.02.00	Onehunga Mangere United (Nzl)
9	Pharrell **TRAINOR**	(17) 20.06.06	Viktoria Griesheim (Ger)
10	Greg **SIAMOA**	(20) 21.08.03	Green Gully (Aus)
11	Juan **GOBBI**	(18) 17.11.05	Sydney Olympic (Aus)
18	Michael **TUMUA LEO**	(21) 15.01.03	Lupe o le Soaga
20	Dilo **TUMUA**	(24) 15.03.00	Vaivase-Tai
21	Kyah **CAHILL**	(21) 13.03.03	Lusail (Qat)

COACH

Ryan **STEWART** (Nir)	(39) 14.05.85	

SOLOMON ISLANDS

GOALKEEPERS

1	Philip **MANGO**	(28) 28.08.95	Central Coast
12	Michael **LAULAE**	(22) 20.05.02	Henderson Eels
20	Harold **NAUANIA**	(26) 10.10.97	Waneagu United

DEFENDERS

2	Allen **PETER**	(28) 11.09.95	Solomon Warriors
3	Leon **KOFANA**	(21) 22.06.02	Rewa (Fij)
4	Junior **DAVID**	(22) 22.09.01	Central Coast
5	Javin **WAE**	(21) 17.11.02	Central Coast
14	Calvin **OHASIO**	(24) 05.04.00	Central Coast
19	Steven **KOTI**	(24) 10.06.00	Kossa
21	David **SUPA**	(23) 21.12.00	Central Coast
22	Prince **TAHANIPUE**	(29) 13.01.95	Central Coast

MIDFIELDERS

6	Hudson **OREINIMA**	(35) 24.07.88	Central Coast
8	Tigi **MOLEA**	(31) 24.09.92	Solomon Warriors
13	Atkin **KAUA**	(28) 04.04.96	Laugu United
18	Hadyn **IRODAO**	(21) 29.10.02	Central Coast
23	Marlon **TAHIOA**	(25) 28.11.98	Central Coast

FORWARDS

7	Junior **FORDNEY**	(24) 26.11.99	Central Coast
9	John **OROBULU**	(23) 29.08.00	Henderson Eels
10	Raphael **LEA'I**	(20) 09.09.03	Adelaide City (Aus)
11	Gagame **FENI**	(31) 21.08.92	Kossa
15	Joses **NAWO**	(36) 03.05.88	Kossa
16	Bobby **LESLIE**	(24) 03.03.00	Central Coast
17	Alvin **HOU**	(27) 18.09.96	Solomon Warriors

COACH

Jacob **MOLI**	(57) 11.05.67	

TAHITI

GOALKEEPERS

1	Tevaearai **TAMATAI**	(23) 15.01.01	Venus
16	Teave **TEAMOTUAITAU**	(32) 17.04.92	Tefana
23	Francois **DECORET**	(25) 10.03.99	Pirae

DEFENDERS

3	Matatia **PAAMA**	(31) 03.10.92	Pirae
4	Haumau **TANETOA**	(19) 18.11.04	Pirae
5	Rainui **AROITA**	(30) 25.01.94	Tamarii Faa'a
7	Kevin **BARBE**	(26) 02.09.97	Venus
8	Eddy **KASPARD**	(23) 27.05.01	Tefana
12	Mauri **HEITAA**	(24) 31.07.99	Venus
15	Pothin **POMA**	(27) 13.02.97	Venus
17	Teva **LOSSEC**	(21) 03.12.02	Campbell Fighting Camels (USA)
20	Taumihau **TIATIA**	(32) 25.07.91	Pirae

MIDFIELDERS

6	Terai **BREMOND**	(23) 16.05.01	Venus
9	Tauhiti **KECK**	(29) 01.08.94	Venus
10	Teaonui **TEHAU**	(31) 01.09.92	Venus
13	Frank **PAPAURA**	(19) 06.04.05	Pueu
14	Alvin **TEHAU**	(35) 10.04.89	Pirae
18	Manuarii **SHAN**	(20) 23.02.04	Venus

FORWARDS

11	Roonui **TINIRAUARII**	(27) 14.03.97	Dragon
19	Ariiura **LABASTE**	(21) 26.07.02	Pirae
21	Mateo **DEGRUMELLE**	(20) 22.08.03	Le Havre (Fra)

COACH

Samuel **GARCIA**	(48) 02.10.75	

VANUATU

A-League champion...Vanuatu's Brian Kaltak was a title winner in Australia with his club Central Coast Martiners

GOALKEEPERS

1	James **IAMAR**	(27) 25.01.97	Tafea
12	Dgen **LEO**	(23) 06.08.00	Classic
23	Joshua **WILLIE**	(24) 13.06.00	ABM Galaxy

DEFENDERS

2	Lency **PHILIP**	(27) 08.06.97	Classic
3	Timothy **BOULET**	(25) 29.11.98	Auckland City (Nzl)
4	Brian **KALTAK**	(30) 30.09.93	Central Coast Mariners (Aus)
5	Jared **CLARK**	(26) 21.01.98	FK Beograd (Aus)
6	Jason **THOMAS**	(27) 20.01.97	Erakor Golden Star
7	Michel **COULON**	(28) 03.12.95	Yatel
11	Tasso **JEFFREY**	(25) 12.08.98	Western Strikers (Aus)
17	Kerry **IAWAK**	(28) 16.03.96	Ifira Black Bird

MIDFIELDERS

8	Claude **ARU**	(27) 25.04.97	North Efate United
10	Bong **KALO**	(27) 18.01.97	ABM Galaxy
14	John **WOHALE**	(26) 09.07.97	Ifira Black Bird
16	John **ALICK**	(33) 25.04.91	Solomon Warriors (Sol)
19	Jayson **TIMATUA**	(25) 27.12.98	ABM Galaxy
20	Alick **WORWORBU**	(26) 27.08.97	Yatel
22	Barry **MANSALE**	(28) 01.11.95	Yatel

FORWARDS

9	Alex **SANIEL**	(27) 08.11.96	Northern Demons (Aus)
13	Jonathan **SPOKEYJACK**	(25) 13.11.98	Ifira Black Bird
15	Godine **TENENE**	(26) 03.05.98	Ifira Black Bird
18	Kensi **TANGIS**	(32) 19.12.91	ABM Galaxy
21	Joe **MOSES**	(22) 22.05.02	ABM Galaxy

COACH

Juliano **SCHMELING** (Bra)	(44) 05.07.79	

(Ages as of 15.06.24)

2024 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

ALBANIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Etrit **BERISHA**	(35) 10.03.89	Empoli (Ita)
12	Elhan **KASTRATI**	(27) 02.02.97	Cittadella (Ita)
23	Thomas **STRAKOSHA**	(29) 19.03.95	Brentford (Eng)

DEFENDERS

2	Ivan **BALLIU**	(32) 01.01.92	Rayo Vallecano (Spa)
3	Mario **MITAJ**	(20) 06.08.03	Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus)
4	Elseid **HYSAJ**	(30) 02.02.94	Lazio (Ita)
5	Arlind **AJETI**	(30) 25.09.93	CFR Cluj (Rou)
6	Berat **DJIMSITI**	(31) 19.02.93	Atalanta (Ita)
13	Enea **MIHAJ**	(25) 05.07.98	Famalicao (Por)
18	Ardian **ISMAJLI**	(27) 30.09.96	Empoli (Ita)
24	Marash **KUMBULLA**	(24) 08.02.00	Sassuolo (Ita)
25	Naser **ALIJI**	(30) 27.12.93	Voluntari (Rou)

MIDFIELDERS

8	Klaus **GJASULA**	(34) 14.12.89	Darmstadt (Ger)
10	Nedim **BAJRAMI**	(25) 28.02.99	Sassuolo (Ita)
14	Qazim **LACI**	(28) 19.01.96	Sparta Prague (Cze)
16	Medon **BERISHA**	(20) 21.10.03	Lecce (Ita)
20	Ylber **RAMADANI**	(28) 12.04.96	Lecce (Ita)
21	Kristjan **ASLLANI**	(22) 09.03.02	Internazionale (Ita)
22	Amir **ABRASHI**	(34) 27.03.90	Grasshoppers (Sui)

FORWARDS

7	Rey **MANAJ**	(27) 24.02.97	Sivasspor (Tur)
9	Jasir **ASANI**	(29) 19.05.95	Gwangju FC (Kor)
11	Armando **BROJA**	(22) 10.09.01	Fulham (Eng)
15	Taulant **SEFERI**	(27) 15.11.96	Baniyas (UAE)
17	Ernest **MUCI**	(23) 19.03.01	Besiktas (Tur)
19	Mirlind **DAKU**	(26) 01.01.98	Rubin Kazan (Rus)
26	Arber **HOXHA**	(25) 06.10.98	Dinamo Zagreb (Cro)

COACH

SYLVINHO (Bra)	(50) 12.04.74	

AUSTRIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Heinz **LINDNER**	(33) 17.07.90	Union Saint-Gilloise (Bel)
12	Niklas **HEDL**	(23) 17.03.01	Rapid Vienna
13	Patrick **PENTZ**	(27) 02.01.97	Brondby (Den)

DEFENDERS

2	Maximilian **WOBER**	(26) 04.02.98	Borussia M'gladbach (Ger)
3	Gernot **TRAUNER**	(32) 25.03.92	Feyenoord (Ned)
4	Kevin **DANSO**	(25) 19.09.98	Lens (Fra)
5	Stefan **POSCH**	(27) 14.05.97	Bologna (Ita)
14	Leopold **QUERFELD**	(20) 20.12.03	Rapid Vienna
15	Philipp **LIENHART**	(27) 11.07.96	Freiburg (Ger)
16	Phillipp **MWENE**	(30) 29.01.94	Mainz (Ger)
21	Flavius **DANILIUC**	(23) 27.04.01	Red Bull Salzburg

MIDFIELDERS

6	Nicolas **SEIWALD**	(23) 04.05.01	RB Leipzig (Ger)
8	Alexander **PRASS**	(23) 26.05.01	Sturm Graz
9	Marcel **SABITZER**	(30) 17.03.94	Borussia Dortmund (Ger)
10	Florian **GRILLITSCH**	(28) 07.08.95	Hoffenheim (Ger)
17	Florian **KAINZ**	(31) 24.10.92	Cologne (Ger)
18	Romano **SCHMID**	(24) 27.01.00	Werder Bremen (Ger)
19	Christoph **BAUMGARTNER**	(24) 01.08.99	RB Leipzig (Ger)
20	Konrad **LAIMER**	(27) 27.05.97	Bayern Munich (Ger)
22	Matthias **SEIDL**	(23) 24.01.01	Rapid Vienna

FORWARDS

7	Marko **ARNAUTOVIC**	(35) 19.04.89	Internazionale (Ita)
11	Michael **GREGORITSCH**	(30) 18.04.94	Freiburg (Ger)
23	Patrick **WIMMER**	(23) 30.05.01	Wolfsburg (Ger)
24	Andreas **WEIMANN**	(32) 05.08.91	West Brom (Eng)
25	Maximilian **ENTRUP**	(26) 25.07.97	Hartberg
26	Marco **GRULL**	(25) 06.07.98	Rapid Vienna

COACH

Ralf **RANGNICK** (Ger)	(65) 29.06.58	

BELGIUM

GOALKEEPERS

1	Koen **CASTEELS**	(31) 25.06.92	Wolfsburg (Ger)
12	Thomas **KAMINSKI**	(31) 23.10.92	Luton Town (Eng)
13	Matz **SELS**	(32) 26.02.92	Nottingham Forest (Eng)

DEFENDERS

2	Zeno **DEBAST**	(20) 24.10.03	Anderlecht
3	Arthur **THEATE**	(24) 25.05.00	Rennes (Fra)
4	Wout **FAES**	(26) 03.04.98	Leicester City (Eng)
5	Jan **VERTONGHEN**	(37) 24.04.87	Anderlecht
15	Thomas **MEUNIER**	(32) 12.09.91	Trabzonspor (Tur)
21	Timothy **CASTAGNE**	(28) 05.12.95	Fulham (Eng)
25	Maxim **DE CUYPER**	(23) 22.12.00	Club Brugge

MIDFIELDERS

6	Axel **WITSEL**	(35) 12.01.89	Atletico Madrid (Spa)
7	Kevin **DE BRUYNE**	(32) 28.06.91	Manchester City (Eng)
8	Youri **TIELEMANS**	(27) 07.05.97	Aston Villa (Eng)
11	Yannick **CARRASCO**	(30) 04.09.93	Al Shabab (KSA)
16	Aster **VRANCKX**	(21) 04.10.02	Wolfsburg (Ger)
17	Charles **DE KETELAERE**	(23) 10.03.01	Atalanta (Ita)
18	Orel **MANGALA**	(26) 18.03.98	Lyon (Fra)
23	Arthur **VERMEEREN**	(19) 07.02.05	Atletico Madrid (Spa)
24	Amadou **ONANA**	(22) 16.08.01	Everton (Eng)

FORWARDS

9	Leandro **TROSSARD**	(29) 04.12.94	Arsenal (Eng)
10	Romelu **LUKAKU**	(31) 13.05.93	Roma (Ita)
14	Dodi **LUKEBAKIO**	(26) 24.09.97	Sevilla (Spa)
19	Johan **BAKAYOKO**	(21) 20.04.03	PSV (Ned)
20	Lois **OPENDA**	(24) 16.02.00	RB Leipzig (Ger)
22	Jeremy **DOKU**	(22) 27.05.02	Manchester City (Eng)

COACH

Domenico **TEDESCO** (Ita/Ger)	(38) 12.09.85	

Quickfire...Bajrami nets the Euros' fastest-ever goal v Italy

Spot on...Arnautovic calmly scores a penalty versus Poland

VAR...Lukaku has one of three goals disallowed at the finals

CROATIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Dominik **LIVAKOVIC**	(29) 09.01.95	Fenerbahce (Tur)
12	Nediljko **LABROVIC**	(24) 10.10.99	Rijeka
23	Ivica **IVUSIC**	(29) 01.02.95	Pafos (Cyp)

DEFENDERS

2	Josip **STANISIC**	(24) 02.04.00	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
3	Marin **PONGRACIC**	(26) 11.09.97	Lecce (Ita)
4	Josko **GVARDIOL**	(22) 23.01.02	Manchester City (Eng)
5	Martin **ERLIC**	(26) 24.01.98	Sassuolo (Ita)
6	Josip **SUTALO**	(24) 28.02.00	Ajax (Ned)
19	Borna **SOSA**	(26) 21.01.98	Ajax (Ned)
21	Domagoj **VIDA**	(35) 29.04.89	AEK Athens (Gre)
22	Josip **JURANOVIC**	(28) 16.08.95	Union Berlin (Ger)

MIDFIELDERS

7	Lovro **MAJER**	(26) 17.01.98	Wolfsburg (Ger)
8	Mateo **KOVACIC**	(30) 06.05.94	Manchester City (Eng)
10	Luka **MODRIC**	(38) 09.09.85	Real Madrid (Spa)
11	Marcelo **BROZOVIC**	(31) 16.11.92	Al Nassr (KSA)
13	Nikola **VLASIC**	(26) 04.10.97	Torino (Ita)
15	Mario **PASALIC**	(29) 09.02.95	Atalanta (Ita)
18	Luka **IVANUSEC**	(25) 26.11.98	Feyenoord (Ned)
25	Luka **SUCIC**	(21) 08.09.02	Red Bull Salzburg (Aut)
26	Martin **BATURINA**	(21) 16.02.03	Dinamo Zagreb

FORWARDS

9	Andrej **KRAMARIC**	(32) 19.06.91	Hoffenheim (Ger)
14	Ivan **PERISIC**	(35) 02.02.89	Hajduk Split
16	Ante **BUDIMIR**	(32) 22.07.91	Osasuna (Spa)
17	Bruno **PETKOVIC**	(29) 16.09.94	Dinamo Zagreb
20	Marko **PJACA**	(29) 06.05.95	Rijeka
24	Marco **PASALIC**	(23) 14.09.00	Rijeka

COACH

Zlatko **DALIC**	(57) 26.10.66	

CZECH REPUBLIC

GOALKEEPERS

1	Jindrich **STANEK**	(28) 27.04.96	Slavia Prague
16	Matej **KOVAR**	(24) 17.05.00	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
23	Vitezslav **JAROS**	(22) 23.07.01	Sturm Graz (Aut)

DEFENDERS

2	David **ZIMA**	(23) 08.11.00	Slavia Prague
3	Tomas **HOLES**	(31) 31.03.93	Slavia Prague
4	Robin **HRANAC**	(24) 29.01.00	Viktoria Plzen
5	Vladimir **COUFAL**	(31) 22.08.92	West Ham United (Eng)
6	Martin **VITIK**	(21) 21.01.03	Sparta Prague
12	David **DOUDERA**	(26) 31.05.98	Slavia Prague
15	David **JURASEK**	(23) 07.08.00	Hoffenheim (Ger)
18	Ladislav **KREJCI**	(25) 20.04.99	Sparta Prague
24	Tomas **VLCEK**	(23) 28.02.01	Slavia Prague

MIDFIELDERS

7	Antonin **BARAK**	(29) 03.12.94	Fiorentina (Ita)
8	Petr **SEVCIK**	(30) 04.05.94	Slavia Prague
14	Lukas **PROVOD**	(27) 23.10.96	Slavia Prague
20	Ondrej **LINGR**	(25) 07.10.98	Feyenoord (Ned)
21	Lukas **CERV**	(23) 10.04.01	Viktoria Plzen
22	Tomas **SOUCEK**	(29) 27.02.95	West Ham United (Eng)
25	Pavel **SULC**	(23) 29.12.00	Viktoria Plzen
26	Matej **JURASEK**	(20) 30.08.03	Slavia Prague

FORWARDS

9	Adam **HLOZEK**	(21) 25.07.02	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
10	Patrik **SCHICK**	(28) 24.01.96	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
11	Jan **KUCHTA**	(27) 08.01.97	Sparta Prague
13	Mojmir **CHYTIL**	(25) 29.04.99	Slavia Prague
17	Vaclav **CERNY**	(26) 17.10.97	Wolfsburg (Ger)
19	Tomas **CHORY**	(29) 26.01.95	Viktoria Plzen

COACH

Ivan **HASEK**	(60) 06.09.63	

DENMARK

GOALKEEPERS

1	Kasper **SCHMEICHEL**	(37) 05.11.86	Anderlecht (Bel)
16	Mads **HERMANSEN**	(23) 11.07.00	Leicester City (Eng)
22	Frederik **RONNOW**	(31) 04.08.92	Union Berlin (Ger)

DEFENDERS

2	Joachim **ANDERSEN**	(28) 31.05.96	Crystal Palace (Eng)
3	Jannik **VESTERGAARD**	(31) 03.08.92	Leicester City (Eng)
4	Simon **KJAER**	(35) 26.03.89	Milan (Ita)
5	Joakim **MAEHLE**	(27) 20.05.97	Wolfsburg (Ger)
6	Andreas **CHRISTENSEN**	(28) 10.04.96	Barcelona (Spa)
13	Mathias **JORGENSEN**	(34) 23.04.90	Brentford (Eng)
17	Victor **KRISTIANSEN**	(21) 16.12.02	Bologna (Ita)
18	Alexander **BAH**	(26) 09.12.97	Benfica (Por)
25	Rasmus **KRISTENSEN**	(26) 11.07.97	Roma (Ita)

MIDFIELDERS

7	Mathias **JENSEN**	(28) 01.01.96	Brentford (Eng)
8	Thomas **DELANEY**	(32) 03.09.91	Anderlecht (Bel)
10	Christian **ERIKSEN**	(32) 14.02.92	Manchester United (Eng)
14	Mikkel **DAMSGAARD**	(23) 03.07.00	Brentford (Eng)
15	Christian **NORGAARD**	(30) 10.03.94	Brentford (Eng)
21	Morten **HJULMAND**	(24) 25.06.99	Sporting (Por)
23	Pierre-Emile **HOJBJERG**	(28) 05.08.95	Tottenham Hotspur (Eng)

FORWARDS

9	Rasmus **HOJLUND**	(21) 04.02.03	Manchester United (Eng)
11	Andreas **SKOV OLSEN**	(24) 29.12.99	Club Brugge (Bel)
12	Kasper **DOLBERG**	(26) 06.10.97	Anderlecht (Bel)
19	Jonas **WIND**	(25) 07.02.99	Wolfsburg (Ger)
20	Yussuf **POULSEN**	(29) 15.06.94	RB Leipzig (Ger)
24	Anders **DREYER**	(26) 02.05.98	Anderlecht (Bel)
26	Jacob **BRUUN LARSEN**	(25) 19.09.98	Burnley (Eng)

COACH

Kasper **HJULMAND**	(52) 09.04.72	

ENGLAND

GOALKEEPERS

1	Jordan **PICKFORD**	(30) 07.03.94	Everton
13	Aaron **RAMSDALE**	(26) 14.05.98	Arsenal
23	Dean **HENDERSON**	(27) 12.03.97	Crystal Palace

DEFENDERS

2	Kyle **WALKER**	(34) 28.05.90	Manchester City
3	Luke **SHAW**	(28) 12.07.95	Manchester United
5	John **STONES**	(30) 28.05.94	Manchester City
6	Marc **GUEHI**	(23) 13.07.00	Crystal Palace
12	Kieran **TRIPPIER**	(33) 19.09.90	Newcastle United
14	Ezri **KONSA**	(26) 23.10.97	Aston Villa
15	Lewis **DUNK**	(32) 21.11.91	Brighton
22	Joe **GOMEZ**	(27) 23.05.97	Liverpool

MIDFIELDERS

4	Declan **RICE**	(25) 14.01.99	Arsenal
8	Trent **ALEXANDER-ARNOLD**	(25) 07.10.98	Liverpool
10	Jude **BELLINGHAM**	(20) 29.06.03	Real Madrid (Spa)
16	Conor **GALLAGHER**	(24) 06.02.00	Chelsea
21	Eberechi **EZE**	(25) 29.06.98	Crystal Palace
25	Adam **WHARTON**	(20) 06.02.04	Crystal Palace
26	Kobbie **MAINOO**	(19) 19.04.05	Manchester United

FORWARDS

7	Bukayo **SAKA**	(22) 05.09.01	Arsenal
9	Harry **KANE**	(30) 28.07.93	Bayern Munich (Ger)
11	Phil **FODEN**	(24) 28.05.00	Manchester City
17	Ivan **TONEY**	(28) 16.03.96	Brentford
18	Anthony **GORDON**	(23) 24.02.01	Newcastle United
19	Ollie **WATKINS**	(28) 30.12.95	Aston Villa
20	Jarrod **BOWEN**	(27) 20.12.96	West Ham United
24	Cole **PALMER**	(22) 06.05.02	Chelsea

COACH

Gareth **SOUTHGATE**	(53) 03.09.70	

FRANCE

GOALKEEPERS

1	Brice **SAMBA**	(30) 26.04.94	Lens
16	Mike **MAIGNAN**	(28) 03.07.95	Milan (Ita)
23	Alphonse **AREOLA**	(31) 27.02.93	West Ham United (Eng)

DEFENDERS

2	Benjamin **PAVARD**	(28) 28.03.96	Internazionale (Ita)
3	Ferland **MENDY**	(29) 08.06.95	Real Madrid (Spa)
4	Dayot **UPAMECANO**	(25) 27.10.98	Bayern Munich (Ger)
5	Jules **KOUNDE**	(25) 12.11.98	Barcelona (Spa)
17	William **SALIBA**	(23) 24.03.01	Arsenal (Eng)
21	Jonathan **CLAUSS**	(31) 25.09.92	Marseille
22	Theo **HERNANDEZ**	(26) 06.10.97	Milan (Ita)
24	Ibrahima **KONATE**	(25) 25.05.99	Liverpool (Eng)

MIDFIELDERS

6	Eduardo **CAMAVINGA**	(21) 10.11.02	Real Madrid (Spa)
7	Antoine **GRIEZMANN**	(33) 21.03.91	Atletico Madrid (Spa)
8	Aurelien **TCHOUAMENI**	(24) 27.01.00	Real Madrid (Spa)
13	N'Golo **KANTE**	(33) 29.03.91	Al Ittihad (KSA)
14	Adrien **RABIOT**	(29) 03.04.95	Juventus (Ita)
18	Warren **ZAIRE-EMERY**	(18) 08.03.06	Paris Saint-Germain
19	Youssouf **FOFANA**	(25) 10.01.99	Monaco

FORWARDS

9	Olivier **GIROUD**	(37) 30.09.86	Milan (Ita)
10	Kylian **MBAPPE**	(25) 20.12.98	Paris Saint-Germain
11	Ousmane **DEMBELE**	(27) 15.05.97	Paris Saint-Germain
12	Randal **KOLO MUANI**	(25) 05.12.98	Paris Saint-Germain
15	Marcus **THURAM**	(26) 06.08.97	Internazionale (Ita)
20	Kingsley **COMAN**	(28) 13.06.96	Bayern Munich (Ger)
25	Bradley **BARCOLA**	(21) 02.09.02	Paris Saint-Germain

COACH

Didier **DESCHAMPS**	(55) 15.10.68	

GEORGIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Giorgi **LORIA**	(38) 27.01.86	Dinamo Tbilisi
12	Luka **GUGESHASHVILI**	(25) 29.04.99	Qarabag (Aze)
25	Giorgi **MAMARDASHVILI**	(23) 29.09.00	Valencia (Spa)

DEFENDERS

2	Otar **KAKABADZE**	(28) 27.06.95	Cracovia (Pol)
3	Lasha **DVALI**	(29) 14.05.95	APOEL (Cyp)
4	Guram **KASHIA**	(36) 04.07.87	Slovan Bratislava (Svk)
5	Solomon **KVIRKVELIA**	(32) 06.02.92	Al Okhdood (KSA)
13	Giorgi **GOCHOLEISHVILI**	(23) 14.02.01	Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr)
14	Luka **LOCHOSHVILI**	(26) 29.05.98	Cremonese (Ita)
15	Giorgi **GVELESIANI**	(33) 05.05.91	Persepolis (Irn)
24	Jemal **TABIDZE**	(28) 18.03.96	Panetolikos (Gre)

MIDFIELDERS

6	Giorgi **KOCHORASHVILI**	(24) 19.06.99	Levante (Spa)
9	Zuriko **DAVITASHVILI**	(23) 15.02.01	Bordeaux (Fra)
10	Giorgi **CHAKVETADZE**	(24) 29.08.99	Watford (Eng)
16	Nika **KVEKVESKIRI**	(32) 29.05.92	Lech Poznan (Pol)
17	Otar **KITEISHVILI**	(28) 26.03.96	Sturm Graz (Aut)
18	Sandro **ALTUNASHVILI**	(27) 19.05.97	Wolfsberger (Aut)
19	Levan **SHENGELIA**	(28) 27.10.95	Panetolikos (Gre)
20	Anzor **MEKVABISHVILI**	(23) 05.06.01	Universitatea Craiova (Rou)
21	Giorgi **TSITAISHVILI**	(23) 18.11.00	Dinamo Batumi
23	Saba **LOBJANIDZE**	(29) 18.12.94	Atlanta United (USA)
26	Gabriel **SIGUA**	(18) 30.06.05	Basel (Sui)

FORWARDS

7	Khvicha **KVARATSKHELIA**	(23) 12.02.01	Napoli (Ita)
8	Budu **ZIVZIVADZE**	(30) 10.03.94	Karlsruher (Ger)
11	Giorgi **KVILITAIA**	(30) 01.10.93	APOEL (Cyp)
22	Georges **MIKAUTADZE**	(23) 31.10.00	Metz (Fra)

COACH

Willy **SAGNOL** (Fra)	(47) 18.03.77	

England's talismanic stars...Bellingham and Kane celebrate

Masked marksman...Mbappe in action in the round of 16

Breakout...Calafiori was one of the few impressive Italians

GERMANY

GOALKEEPERS

1	Manuel **NEUER**	(38) 27.03.86	Bayern Munich
12	Oliver **BAUMANN**	(34) 02.06.90	Hoffenheim
22	Marc-Andre **TER STEGEN**	(32) 30.04.92	Barcelona (Spa)

DEFENDERS

2	Antonio **RUDIGER**	(31) 03.03.93	Real Madrid (Spa)
3	David **RAUM**	(26) 22.04.98	RB Leipzig
4	Jonathan **TAH**	(28) 11.02.96	Bayer Leverkusen
6	Joshua **KIMMICH**	(29) 08.02.95	Bayern Munich
15	Nico **SCHLOTTERBECK**	(24) 01.12.99	Borussia Dortmund
16	Waldemar **ANTON**	(27) 20.07.96	Stuttgart
18	Maximilian **MITTELSTADT**	(27) 18.03.97	Stuttgart
20	Benjamin **HENRICHS**	(27) 23.02.97	RB Leipzig
24	Robin **KOCH**	(27) 17.07.96	Eintracht Frankfurt

MIDFIELDERS

5	Pascal **GROSS**	(32) 15.06.91	Brighton (Eng)
8	Toni **KROOS**	(34) 04.01.90	Real Madrid (Spa)
10	Jamal **MUSIALA**	(21) 26.02.03	Bayern Munich
11	Chris **FUHRICH**	(26) 09.01.98	Stuttgart
17	Florian **WIRTZ**	(21) 03.05.03	Bayer Leverkusen
21	Ilkay **GUNDOGAN**	(33) 24.10.90	Barcelona (Spa)
23	Robert **ANDRICH**	(29) 22.09.94	Bayer Leverkusen
25	Emre **CAN**	(30) 12.01.94	Borussia Dortmund

FORWARDS

7	Kai **HAVERTZ**	(25) 11.06.99	Arsenal (Eng)
9	Niclas **FULLKRUG**	(31) 09.02.93	Borussia Dortmund
13	Thomas **MULLER**	(34) 13.09.89	Bayern Munich
14	Maximilian **BEIER**	(21) 17.10.02	Hoffenheim
19	Leroy **SANE**	(28) 11.01.96	Bayern Munich
26	Deniz **UNDAV**	(27) 19.07.96	Stuttgart

COACH

Julian **NAGELSMANN**	(36) 23.07.87	

HUNGARY

GOALKEEPERS

1	Peter **GULACSI**	(34) 06.05.90	RB Leipzig (Ger)
12	Denes **DIBUSZ**	(33) 16.11.90	Ferencvaros
22	Peter **SZAPPANOS**	(33) 14.11.90	Paks

DEFENDERS

2	Adam **LANG**	(31) 17.01.93	Omonia Nicosia (Cyp)
3	Botond **BALOGH**	(22) 06.06.02	Parma (Ita)
4	Attila **SZALAI**	(26) 20.01.98	Freiburg (Ger)
5	Attila **FIOLA**	(34) 17.02.90	Fehervar
6	Willi **ORBAN**	(31) 03.11.92	RB Leipzig (Ger)
7	Loic **NEGO**	(33) 15.01.91	Le Havre (Fra)
11	Milos **KERKEZ**	(20) 07.11.03	Bournemouth (Eng)
14	Bendeguz **BOLLA**	(24) 22.11.99	Servette (Sui)
21	Endre **BOTKA**	(29) 25.08.94	Ferencvaros
24	Marton **DARDAI**	(22) 12.02.02	Hertha Berlin (Ger)

MIDFIELDERS

8	Adam **NAGY**	(28) 17.06.95	Spezia (Ita)
10	Dominik **SZOBOSZLAI**	(23) 25.10.00	Liverpool (Eng)
13	Andras **SCHAFER**	(25) 13.04.99	Union Berlin (Ger)
15	Laszlo **KLEINHEISLER**	(30) 08.04.94	Hajduk Split (Cro)
16	Daniel **GAZDAG**	(28) 02.03.96	Philadelphia Union (USA)
17	Callum **STYLES**	(24) 28.03.00	Sunderland (Eng)
18	Zsolt **NAGY**	(31) 25.05.93	Puskas Akademia
26	Mihaly **KATA**	(22) 13.04.02	MTK Budapest

FORWARDS

9	Martin **ADAM**	(29) 06.11.94	Ulsan HD (Kor)
19	Barnabas **VARGA**	(29) 25.10.94	Ferencvaros
20	Roland **SALLAI**	(27) 22.05.97	Freiburg (Ger)
23	Kevin **CSOBOTH**	(23) 20.06.00	Ujpest
25	Krisztofer **HORVATH**	(22) 08.01.02	Kecskemet

COACH

Marco **ROSSI** (Ita)	(59) 09.09.64	

ITALY

GOALKEEPERS

1	Gianluigi **DONNARUMMA**	(25) 25.02.99	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
12	Guglielmo **VICARIO**	(27) 07.10.96	Tottenham Hotspur (Eng)
26	Alex **MERET**	(27) 22.03.97	Napoli

DEFENDERS

2	Giovanni **DI LORENZO**	(30) 04.08.93	Napoli
3	Federico **DIMARCO**	(26) 10.11.97	Internazionale
4	Alessandro **BUONGIORNO**	(25) 06.06.99	Torino
5	Riccardo **CALAFIORI**	(22) 19.05.02	Bologna
6	Federico **GATTI**	(25) 24.06.98	Juventus
13	Matteo **DARMIAN**	(34) 02.12.89	Internazionale
15	Raoul **BELLANOVA**	(24) 17.05.00	Torino
17	Gianluca **MANCINI**	(28) 17.04.96	Roma
23	Alessandro **BASTONI**	(25) 13.04.99	Internazionale
24	Andrea **CAMBIASO**	(24) 20.02.00	Juventus

MIDFIELDERS

7	Davide **FRATTESI**	(24) 22.09.99	Internazionale
8	**JORGINHO**	(32) 20.12.91	Arsenal (Eng)
10	Lorenzo **PELLEGRINI**	(27) 19.06.96	Roma
16	Bryan **CRISTANTE**	(29) 03.03.95	Roma
18	Nicolo **BARELLA**	(27) 07.02.97	Internazionale
21	Nicolo **FAGIOLI**	(23) 12.02.01	Juventus
25	Michael **FOLORUNSHO**	(26) 07.02.98	Hellas Verona

FORWARDS

9	Gianluca **SCAMACCA**	(25) 01.01.99	Atalanta
11	Giacomo **RASPADORI**	(24) 18.02.00	Napoli
14	Federico **CHIESA**	(26) 25.10.97	Juventus
19	Mateo **RETEGUI**	(25) 29.04.99	Genoa
20	Mattia **ZACCAGNI**	(28) 16.06.95	Lazio
22	Stephan **EL SHAARAWY**	(31) 27.10.92	Roma

COACH

Luciano **SPALLETTI**	(65) 07.03.59	

(Ages as of 14.06.24)

2024 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

NETHERLANDS

GOALKEEPERS

1	Bart **VERBRUGGEN**	(21) 18.08.02	Brighton (Eng)
13	Justin **BIJLOW**	(26) 22.01.98	Feyenoord
23	Mark **FLEKKEN**	(31) 13.06.93	Brentford (Eng)

DEFENDERS

2	Lutsharel **GEERTRUIDA**	(23) 18.07.00	Feyenoord
3	Matthijs **DE LIGT**	(24) 12.08.99	Bayern Munich (Ger)
4	Virgil **VAN DIJK**	(32) 08.07.91	Liverpool (Eng)
5	Nathan **AKE**	(29) 18.02.95	Manchester City (Eng)
6	Stefan **DE VRIJ**	(32) 05.02.92	Internazionale (Ita)
12	Jeremie **FRIMPONG**	(23) 10.12.00	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
15	Micky **VAN DE VEN**	(23) 19.04.01	Tottenham Hotspur (Eng)
17	Daley **BLIND**	(34) 09.03.90	Girona (Spa)
20	Ian **MAATSEN**	(22) 10.03.02	Borussia Dortmund (Ger)
22	Denzel **DUMFRIES**	(28) 18.04.96	Internazionale (Ita)

MIDFIELDERS

7	Xavi **SIMONS**	(21) 21.04.03	RB Leipzig (Ger)
8	Georginio **WIJNALDUM**	(33) 11.11.90	Ettifaq (KSA)
14	Tijjani **REIJNDERS**	(25) 29.07.98	Milan (Ita)
16	Joey **VEERMAN**	(25) 19.11.98	PSV
24	Jerdy **SCHOUTEN**	(27) 12.01.97	PSV
26	Ryan **GRAVENBERCH**	(22) 16.05.02	Liverpool (Eng)

FORWARDS

9	Wout **WEGHORST**	(31) 07.08.92	Hoffenheim (Ger)
10	Memphis **DEPAY**	(30) 13.02.94	Atletico Madrid (Spa)
11	Cody **GAKPO**	(25) 07.05.99	Liverpool (Eng)
18	Donyell **MALEN**	(25) 19.01.99	Borussia Dortmund (Ger)
19	Brian **BROBBEY**	(22) 01.02.02	Ajax
21	Joshua **ZIRKZEE**	(23) 22.05.01	Bologna (Ita)
25	Steven **BERGWIJN**	(26) 08.10.97	Ajax

COACH

Ronald **KOEMAN**	(61) 21.03.63	

POLAND

GOALKEEPERS

1	Wojciech **SZCZESNY**	(34) 18.04.90	Juventus (Ita)
12	Lukasz **SKORUPSKI**	(33) 05.05.91	Bologna (Ita)
22	Marcin **BULKA**	(24) 04.10.99	Nice (Fra)

DEFENDERS

2	Bartosz **SALAMON**	(33) 01.05.91	Lech Poznan
3	Pawel **DAWIDOWICZ**	(29) 20.05.95	Hellas Verona (Ita)
4	Sebastian **WALUKIEWICZ**	(24) 05.04.00	Empoli (Ita)
5	Jan **BEDNAREK**	(28) 12.04.96	Southampton (Eng)
14	Jakub **KIWIOR**	(24) 15.02.00	Arsenal (Eng)
15	Tymoteusz **PUCHACZ**	(25) 23.01.99	Kaiserslautern (Ger)
18	Bartosz **BERESZYNSKI**	(31) 12.07.92	Empoli (Ita)

MIDFIELDERS

6	Jakub **PIOTROWSKI**	(26) 04.10.97	Ludogorets (Bul)
8	Jakub **MODER**	(25) 07.04.99	Brighton (Eng)
10	Piotr **ZIELINSKI**	(30) 20.05.94	Napoli (Ita)
11	Kamil **GROSICKI**	(36) 08.06.88	Pogon Szczecin
13	Taras **ROMANCZUK**	(32) 14.11.91	Jagiellonia Bialystok
17	Damian **SZYMANSKI**	(28) 16.06.95	AEK Athens (Gre)
19	Przemyslaw **FRANKOWSKI**	(29) 12.04.95	Lens (Fra)
20	Sebastian **SZYMANSKI**	(25) 10.05.99	Fenerbahce (Tur)
21	Nicola **ZALEWSKI**	(22) 23.01.02	Roma (Ita)
24	Bartosz **SLISZ**	(25) 29.03.99	Atlanta United (USA)
25	Michal **SKORAS**	(24) 15.02.00	Club Brugge (Bel)

FORWARDS

7	Karol **SWIDERSKI**	(27) 23.01.97	Hellas Verona (Ita)
9	Robert **LEWANDOWSKI**	(35) 21.08.88	Barcelona (Spa)
16	Adam **BUKSA**	(27) 12.07.96	Antalyaspor (Tur)
23	Krzysztof **PIATEK**	(28) 01.07.95	Istanbul Basaksehir (Tur)
26	Kacper **URBANSKI**	(19) 07.09.04	Bologna (Ita)

COACH

Michal **PROBIERZ**	(51) 24.09.72	

PORTUGAL

GOALKEEPERS

1	Rui **PATRICIO**	(36) 15.02.88	Roma (Ita)
12	Jose **SA**	(31) 17.01.93	Wolves (Eng)
22	Diogo **COSTA**	(24) 19.09.99	Porto

DEFENDERS

2	Nelson **SEMEDO**	(30) 16.11.93	Wolves (Eng)
3	**PEPE**	(41) 26.02.83	Porto
4	Ruben **DIAS**	(27) 14.05.97	Manchester City (Eng)
5	Diogo **DALOT**	(25) 18.03.99	Manchester United (Eng)
13	**DANILO**	(32) 09.09.91	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
14	Goncalo **INACIO**	(22) 25.08.01	Sporting
19	Nuno **MENDES**	(21) 19.06.02	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
20	Joao **CANCELO**	(30) 27.05.94	Barcelona (Spa)
24	Antonio **SILVA**	(20) 30.10.03	Benfica

MIDFIELDERS

6	Joao **PALHINHA**	(28) 09.07.95	Fulham (Eng)
8	Bruno **FERNANDES**	(29) 08.09.94	Manchester United (Eng)
10	Bernardo **SILVA**	(29) 10.08.94	Manchester City (Eng)
15	Joao **NEVES**	(19) 27.09.04	Benfica
16	Matheus **NUNES**	(25) 27.08.98	Manchester City (Eng)
18	Ruben **NEVES**	(27) 13.03.97	Al Hilal (KSA)
23	**VITINHA**	(24) 13.02.00	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
25	Pedro **NETO**	(24) 09.03.00	Wolves (Eng)

FORWARDS

7	Cristiano **RONALDO**	(39) 05.02.85	Al Nassr (KSA)
9	Goncalo **RAMOS**	(22) 20.06.01	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
11	Joao **FELIX**	(24) 10.11.99	Barcelona (Spa)
17	Rafael **LEAO**	(25) 10.06.99	Milan (Ita)
21	Diogo **JOTA**	(27) 04.12.96	Liverpool (Eng)
26	Francisco **CONCEICAO**	(21) 14.12.02	Porto

COACH

Roberto **MARTINEZ** (Spa)	(50) 13.07.73	

Last 16...the Dutch see off Romania in the knockout rounds

Goal king...Lewandowski nets in his fourth successive Euros

***A Selecao*...Portugal pose for a team photo in the last 16**

ROMANIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Florin **NITA**	(36) 03.07.87	Gaziantep (Tur)
12	Horatiu **MOLDOVAN**	(26) 20.01.98	Atletico Madrid (Spa)
16	Stefan **TARNOVANU**	(24) 09.05.00	FCSB

DEFENDERS

2	Andrei **RATIU**	(25) 20.06.98	Rayo Vallecano (Spa)
3	Radu **DRAGUSIN**	(22) 03.02.02	Tottenham Hotspur (Eng)
4	Adrian **RUS**	(28) 18.03.96	Pafos (Cyp)
5	Ionut **NEDELCEARU**	(28) 25.04.96	Palermo (Ita)
11	Nicusor **BANCU**	(31) 18.09.92	Universitatea Craiova
15	Andrei **BURCA**	(31) 15.04.93	Al Okhdood (KSA)
22	Vasile **MOGOS**	(31) 31.10.92	CFR Cluj
24	Bogdan **RACOVITAN**	(24) 06.06.00	Rakow Czestochowa (Pol)

MIDFIELDERS

6	Marius **MARIN**	(25) 30.08.98	Pisa (Ita)
8	Alexandru **CICALDAU**	(26) 08.07.97	Konyaspor (Tur)
10	Ianis **HAGI**	(25) 22.10.98	Alaves (Spa)
14	Darius **OLARU**	(26) 03.03.98	FCSB
18	Razvan **MARIN**	(28) 23.05.96	Empoli (Ita)
21	Nicolae **STANCIU**	(31) 07.05.93	Damac (KSA)
23	Deian **SORESCU**	(26) 29.08.97	Gaziantep (Tur)
26	Adrian **SUT**	(25) 30.04.99	FCSB

FORWARDS

7	Denis **ALIBEC**	(33) 05.01.91	Muaither (Qat)
9	George **PUSCAS**	(28) 08.04.96	Bari (Ita)
13	Valentin **MIHAILA**	(24) 02.02.00	Parma (Ita)
17	Florinel **COMAN**	(26) 10.04.98	FCSB
19	Denis **DRAGUS**	(24) 06.07.99	Gaziantep (Tur)
20	Dennis **MAN**	(25) 26.08.98	Parma (Ita)
25	Daniel **BIRLIGEA**	(24) 19.04.00	CFR Cluj

COACH

Edward **IORDANESCU**	(45) 16.06.78	

SCOTLAND

GOALKEEPERS

1	Angus **GUNN**	(28) 22.01.96	Norwich City (Eng)
12	Liam **KELLY**	(28) 23.01.96	Motherwell
21	Zander **CLARK**	(31) 26.06.92	Hearts

DEFENDERS

2	Anthony **RALSTON**	(25) 16.11.98	Celtic
3	Andy **ROBERTSON**	(30) 11.03.94	Liverpool (Eng)
5	Grant **HANLEY**	(32) 20.11.91	Norwich City (Eng)
6	Kieran **TIERNEY**	(27) 05.06.97	Real Sociedad (Spa)
13	Jack **HENDRY**	(29) 07.05.95	Ettifaq (KSA)
15	Ryan **PORTEOUS**	(25) 25.03.99	Watford (Eng)
16	Liam **COOPER**	(32) 30.08.91	Leeds United (Eng)
22	Ross **McCRORIE**	(26) 18.03.98	Bristol City (Eng)
24	Greg **TAYLOR**	(26) 05.11.97	Celtic
26	Scott **McKENNA**	(27) 12.11.96	Copenhagen (Den)

MIDFIELDERS

4	Scott **McTOMINAY**	(27) 08.12.96	Manchester United (Eng)
7	John **McGINN**	(29) 18.10.94	Aston Villa (Eng)
8	Callum **McGREGOR**	(31) 14.06.93	Celtic
11	Ryan **CHRISTIE**	(29) 22.02.95	Bournemouth (Eng)
14	Billy **GILMOUR**	(23) 11.06.01	Brighton (Eng)
17	Stuart **ARMSTRONG**	(32) 30.03.92	Southampton (Eng)
20	Ryan **JACK**	(32) 27.02.92	Rangers
23	Kenny **McLEAN**	(32) 08.01.92	Norwich City (Eng)

FORWARDS

9	Lawrence **SHANKLAND**	(28) 10.08.95	Hearts
10	Che **ADAMS**	(27) 13.07.96	Southampton (Eng)
18	Lewis **MORGAN**	(27) 30.09.96	New York Red Bulls (USA)
19	Tommy **CONWAY**	(21) 06.08.02	Bristol City (Eng)
25	James **FORREST**	(32) 07.07.91	Celtic

COACH

Steve **CLARKE**	(60) 29.08.63	

SERBIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Predrag **RAJKOVIC**	(28) 31.10.95	Mallorca (Spa)
12	Djordje **PETROVIC**	(24) 08.10.99	Chelsea (Eng)
23	Vanja **MILINKOVIC-SAVIC**	(27) 20.02.97	Torino (Ita)

DEFENDERS

2	Strahinja **PAVLOVIC**	(23) 24.05.01	Red Bull Salzburg (Aut)
3	Nemanja **STOJIC**	(26) 15.01.98	TSC Backa Topola
4	Nikola **MILENKOVIC**	(26) 12.10.97	Fiorentina (Ita)
13	Milos **VELJKOVIC**	(28) 26.09.95	Werder Bremen (Ger)
15	Srdjan **BABIC**	(28) 22.04.96	Spartak Moscow (Rus)
24	Uros **SPAJIC**	(31) 13.02.93	Red Star Belgrade
25	Filip **MLADENOVIC**	(32) 15.08.91	Panathinaikos (Gre)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Nemanja **MAKSIMOVIC**	(29) 26.01.95	Getafe (Spa)
6	Nemanja **GUDELJ**	(32) 16.11.91	Sevilla (Spa)
10	Dusan **TADIC**	(35) 20.11.88	Fenerbahce (Tur)
11	Filip **KOSTIC**	(31) 01.11.92	Juventus (Ita)
14	Andrija **ZIVKOVIC**	(27) 11.07.96	PAOK (Gre)
16	Srdjan **MIJAILOVIC**	(30) 10.11.93	Red Star Belgrade
17	Ivan **ILIC**	(23) 17.03.01	Torino (Ita)
19	Lazar **SAMARDZIC**	(22) 24.02.02	Udinese (Ita)
20	Sergej **MILINKOVIC-SAVIC**	(29) 27.02.95	Al Hilal (KSA)
21	Mijat **GACINOVIC**	(29) 08.02.95	AEK Athens (Gre)
22	Sasa **LUKIC**	(27) 13.08.96	Fulham (Eng)
26	Veljko **BIRMANCEVIC**	(26) 05.03.98	Sparta Prague (Cze)

FORWARDS

7	Dusan **VLAHOVIC**	(24) 28.01.00	Juventus (Ita)
8	Luka **JOVIC**	(26) 23.12.97	Milan (Ita)
9	Aleksandar **MITROVIC**	(29) 16.09.94	Al Hilal (KSA)
18	Petar **RATKOV**	(20) 18.08.03	Red Bull Salzburg (Aut)

COACH

Dragan **STOJKOVIC**	(59) 03.03.65	

SLOVAKIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Martin **DUBRAVKA**	(35) 15.01.89	Newcastle United (Eng)
12	Marek **RODAK**	(27) 13.12.96	Fulham (Eng)
23	Henrich **RAVAS**	(26) 16.08.97	New England Revolution (USA)

DEFENDERS

2	Peter **PEKARIK**	(37) 30.10.86	Hertha Berlin (Ger)
3	Denis **VAVRO**	(28) 10.04.96	Copenhagen (Den)
4	Adam **OBERT**	(21) 23.08.02	Cagliari (Ita)
6	Norbert **GYOMBER**	(31) 03.07.92	Salernitana (Ita)
14	Milan **SKRINIAR**	(29) 11.02.95	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
15	Vernon **DE MARCO**	(31) 18.11.92	Hatta (UAE)
16	David **HANCKO**	(26) 13.12.97	Feyenoord (Ned)
25	Sebastian **KOSA**	(20) 13.09.03	Spartak Trnava

MIDFIELDERS

5	Tomas **RIGO**	(21) 03.07.02	Banik Ostrava (Cze)
8	Ondrej **DUDA**	(29) 05.12.94	Hellas Verona (Ita)
11	Laszlo **BENES**	(26) 09.09.97	Hamburg (Ger)
13	Patrik **HROSOVSKY**	(32) 22.04.92	Genk (Bel)
19	Juraj **KUCKA**	(37) 26.02.87	Slovan Bratislava
21	Matus **BERO**	(28) 06.09.95	Bochum (Ger)
22	Stanislav **LOBOTKA**	(29) 25.11.94	Napoli (Ita)

FORWARDS

7	Tomas **SUSLOV**	(22) 07.06.02	Hellas Verona (Ita)
9	Robert **BOZENIK**	(24) 18.11.99	Boavista (Por)
10	Lubomir **TUPTA**	(26) 27.03.98	Slovan Liberec (Cze)
17	Lukas **HARASLIN**	(28) 26.05.96	Sparta Prague (Cze)
18	David **STRELEC**	(23) 04.04.01	Slovan Bratislava
20	David **DURIS**	(25) 22.03.99	Ascoli (Ita)
24	Leo **SAUER**	(18) 16.12.05	Feyenoord (Ned)
26	Ivan **SCHRANZ**	(30) 13.09.93	Slavia Prague (Cze)

COACH

Francesco **CALZONA** (Ita)	(55) 24.10.68	

SLOVENIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Jan **OBLAK**	(31) 07.01.93	Atletico Madrid (Spa)
12	Vid **BELEC**	(34) 06.06.90	APOEL (Cyp)
16	Igor **VEKIC**	(26) 06.05.98	Vejle (Den)

DEFENDERS

2	Zan **KARNICNIK**	(29) 18.09.94	Celje
3	Jure **BALKOVEC**	(29) 09.09.94	Alanyaspor (Tur)
4	Miha **BLAZIC**	(31) 08.05.93	Lech Poznan (Pol)
6	Jaka **BIJOL**	(25) 05.02.99	Udinese (Ita)
13	Erik **JANZA**	(30) 21.06.93	Gornik Zabrze (Pol)
20	Petar **STOJANOVIC**	(28) 07.10.95	Sampdoria (Ita)
21	Vanja **DRKUSIC**	(24) 30.10.99	Sochi (Rus)
23	David **BREKALO**	(25) 03.12.98	Orlando City (USA)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Jon **GORENC STANKOVIC**	(28) 14.01.96	Sturm Graz (Aut)
7	Benjamin **VERBIC**	(30) 27.11.93	Panathinaikos (Gre)
8	Sandi **LOVRIC**	(26) 28.03.98	Udinese (Ita)
10	Timi Max **ELSNIK**	(26) 29.04.98	Olimpija Ljubljana
14	Jasmin **KURTIC**	(35) 10.01.89	Sudtirol (Ita)
15	Tomi **HORVAT**	(25) 24.03.99	Sturm Graz (Aut)
22	Adam **GNEZDA CERIN**	(24) 16.07.99	Panathinaikos (Gre)
24	Nino **ZUGELJ**	(24) 23.05.00	Bodo/Glimt (Nor)
25	Adrian **ZELJKOVIC**	(21) 19.08.02	Spartak Trnava (Svk)
26	Josip **ILICIC**	(36) 29.01.88	Maribor

FORWARDS

9	Andraz **SPORAR**	(30) 27.02.94	Panathinaikos (Gre)
11	Benjamin **SESKO**	(21) 31.05.03	RB Leipzig (Ger)
17	Jan **MLAKAR**	(25) 23.10.98	Pisa (Ita)
18	Zan **VIPOTNIK**	(22) 18.03.02	Bordeaux (Fra)
19	Zan **CELAR**	(25) 14.03.99	Lugano (Sui)

COACH

Matjaz **KEK**	(62) 09.09.61	

SPAIN

GOALKEEPERS

1	David **RAYA**	(28) 15.09.95	Arsenal (Eng)
13	Alex **REMIRO**	(29) 24.03.95	Real Sociedad
23	Unai **SIMON**	(27) 11.06.97	Athletic Club

DEFENDERS

2	Dani **CARVAJAL**	(32) 11.01.92	Real Madrid
3	Robin **LE NORMAND**	(27) 11.11.96	Real Sociedad
4	**NACHO**	(34) 18.01.90	Real Madrid
5	Dani **VIVIAN**	(24) 05.07.99	Athletic Club
12	Alex **GRIMALDO**	(28) 20.09.95	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
14	Aymeric **LAPORTE**	(30) 27.05.94	Al Nassr (KSA)
22	Jesus **NAVAS**	(38) 21.11.85	Sevilla
24	Marc **CUCURELLA**	(25) 22.07.98	Chelsea (Eng)

MIDFIELDERS

6	Mikel **MERINO**	(27) 22.06.96	Real Sociedad
8	**FABIAN** Ruiz	(28) 03.04.96	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
15	Alex **BAENA**	(22) 20.07.01	Villarreal
16	**RODRI**	(27) 22.06.96	Manchester City (Eng)
18	Martin **ZUBIMENDI**	(25) 02.02.99	Real Sociedad
20	**PEDRI**	(21) 25.11.02	Barcelona
25	**FERMIN** Lopez	(21) 11.05.03	Barcelona

FORWARDS

7	Alvaro **MORATA**	(31) 23.10.92	Atletico Madrid
9	**JOSELU**	(34) 27.03.90	Real Madrid
10	Dani **OLMO**	(26) 07.05.98	RB Leipzig (Ger)
11	Ferran **TORRES**	(24) 29.02.00	Barcelona
17	Nico **WILLIAMS**	(21) 12.07.02	Athletic Club
19	Lamine **YAMAL**	(16) 13.07.07	Barcelona
21	Mikel **OYARZABAL**	(27) 21.04.97	Real Sociedad
26	Ayoze **PEREZ**	(30) 29.07.93	Real Betis

COACH

Luis **DE LA FUENTE**	(62) 21.06.61	

Swiss superstar...Ndoye produced some electric displays

Wondersave...Gunok keeps out Austria with his late heroics

Wing twins...Yamal and Williams proved too hot to handle

SWITZERLAND

GOALKEEPERS

1	Yann **SOMMER**	(35) 17.12.88	Internazionale (Ita)
12	Yvon **MVOGO**	(30) 06.06.94	Lorient (Fra)
21	Gregor **KOBEL**	(26) 06.12.97	Borussia Dortmund (Ger)

DEFENDERS

2	Leonidas **STERGIOU**	(22) 03.03.02	Stuttgart (Ger)
3	Silvan **WIDMER**	(31) 05.03.93	Mainz (Ger)
4	Nico **ELVEDI**	(27) 30.09.96	Borussia M'gladbach (Ger)
5	Manuel **AKANJI**	(28) 19.07.95	Manchester City (Eng)
13	Ricardo **RODRIGUEZ**	(31) 25.08.92	Torino (Ita)
15	Cedric **ZESIGER**	(25) 24.06.98	Wolfsburg (Ger)
22	Fabian **SCHAR**	(32) 20.12.91	Newcastle United (Eng)

MIDFIELDERS

6	Denis **ZAKARIA**	(27) 20.11.96	Monaco (Fra)
8	Remo **FREULER**	(32) 15.04.92	Bologna (Ita)
10	Granit **XHAKA**	(31) 27.09.92	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
14	Steven **ZUBER**	(32) 17.08.91	AEK Athens (Gre)
16	Vincent **SIERRO**	(28) 08.10.95	Toulouse (Fra)
20	Michel **AEBISCHER**	(27) 06.01.97	Bologna (Ita)
24	Ardon **JASHARI**	(21) 30.07.02	Luzern
26	Fabian **RIEDER**	(22) 16.02.02	Rennes (Fra)

FORWARDS

7	Breel **EMBOLO**	(27) 14.02.97	Monaco (Fra)
9	Noah **OKAFOR**	(24) 24.05.00	Milan (Ita)
11	Renato **STEFFEN**	(32) 03.11.91	Lugano
17	Ruben **VARGAS**	(25) 05.08.98	Augsburg (Ger)
18	Kwadwo **DUAH**	(27) 24.02.97	Ludogorets (Bul)
19	Dan **NDOYE**	(23) 25.10.00	Bologna (Ita)
23	Xherdan **SHAQIRI**	(32) 10.10.91	Chicago Fire (USA)
25	Zeki **AMDOUNI**	(23) 04.12.00	Burnley (Eng)

COACH

Murat **YAKIN**	(49) 15.09.74	

TURKEY

GOALKEEPERS

1	Mert **GUNOK**	(35) 01.03.89	Besiktas
12	Altay **BAYINDIR**	(26) 14.04.98	Manchester United (Eng)
23	Ugurcan **CAKIR**	(28) 05.04.96	Trabzonspor

DEFENDERS

2	Zeki **CELIK**	(27) 17.02.97	Roma (Ita)
3	Merih **DEMIRAL**	(26) 05.03.98	Al Ahli (KSA)
4	Samet **AKAYDIN**	(30) 13.03.94	Panathinaikos (Gre)
13	Ahmetcan **KAPLAN**	(21) 16.01.03	Ajax (Ned)
14	Abdulkerim **BARDAKCI**	(29) 07.09.94	Galatasaray
18	Mert **MULDUR**	(25) 03.04.99	Fenerbahce
20	Ferdi **KADIOGLU**	(24) 07.10.99	Fenerbahce
22	Kaan **AYHAN**	(29) 10.11.94	Galatasaray

MIDFIELDERS

5	Okay **YOKUSLU**	(30) 09.03.94	West Brom (Eng)
6	Orkun **KOKCU**	(23) 29.12.00	Benfica (Por)
8	Arda **GULER**	(19) 25.02.05	Real Madrid (Spa)
10	Hakan **CALHANOGLU**	(30) 08.02.94	Internazionale (Ita)
11	Yusuf **YAZICI**	(27) 29.01.97	Lille (Fra)
15	Salih **OZCAN**	(26) 11.01.98	Borussia Dortmund (Ger)
16	Ismail **YUKSEK**	(25) 26.01.99	Fenerbahce
17	Irfan Can **KAHVECI**	(28) 15.07.95	Fenerbahce

FORWARDS

7	Kerem **AKTURKOGLU**	(25) 21.10.98	Galatasaray
9	Cenk **TOSUN**	(33) 07.06.91	Besiktas
19	Kenan **YILDIZ**	(19) 04.05.05	Juventus (Ita)
21	Baris Alper **YILMAZ**	(24) 23.05.00	Galatasaray
24	Semih **KILICSOY**	(18) 15.08.05	Besiktas
25	Yunus **AKGUN**	(23) 07.07.00	Leicester City (Eng)
26	Bertug **YILDIRIM**	(22) 12.01.02	Rennes (Fra)

COACH

Vincenzo **MONTELLA** (Ita)	(49) 18.06.74	

UKRAINE

GOALKEEPERS

1	Heorhiy **BUSHCHAN**	(30) 31.05.94	Dynamo Kyiv
12	Anatoliy **TRUBIN**	(22) 01.08.01	Benfica (Por)
23	Andriy **LUNIN**	(25) 11.02.99	Real Madrid (Spa)

DEFENDERS

2	Yukhym **KONOPLYA**	(24) 26.08.99	Shakhtar Donetsk
3	Oleksandr **SVATOK**	(29) 27.09.94	Dnipro-1
4	Maksym **TALOVYEROV**	(23) 28.06.00	LASK (Aut)
13	Illia **ZABARNYI**	(21) 01.09.02	Bournemouth (Eng)
16	Vitaliy **MYKOLENKO**	(25) 29.05.99	Everton (Eng)
17	Oleksandr **ZINCHENKO**	(27) 15.12.96	Arsenal (Eng)
21	Valeriy **BONDAR**	(25) 27.02.99	Shakhtar Donetsk
22	Mykola **MATVIYENKO**	(28) 02.05.96	Shakhtar Donetsk
24	Oleksandr **TYMCHYK**	(27) 20.01.97	Dynamo Kyiv
26	Bohdan **MYKHAYLICHENKO**	(27) 21.03.97	Polissya

MIDFIELDERS

5	Serhiy **SYDORCHUK**	(33) 02.05.91	Westerlo (Bel)
6	Taras **STEPANENKO**	(34) 08.08.89	Shakhtar Donetsk
8	Ruslan **MALINOVSKYI**	(31) 04.05.93	Genoa (Ita)
14	Heorhiy **SUDAKOV**	(21) 01.09.02	Shakhtar Donetsk
15	Viktor **TSYHANKOV**	(26) 15.11.97	Girona (Spa)
18	Volodymyr **BRAZHKO**	(22) 23.01.02	Dynamo Kyiv
19	Mykola **SHAPARENKO**	(25) 04.10.98	Dynamo Kyiv
20	Oleksandr **ZUBKOV**	(27) 03.08.96	Shakhtar Donetsk

FORWARDS

7	Andriy **YARMOLENKO**	(34) 23.10.89	Dynamo Kyiv
9	Roman **YAREMCHUK**	(28) 27.11.95	Valencia (Spa)
10	Mykhailo **MUDRYK**	(23) 05.01.01	Chelsea (Eng)
11	Artem **DOVBYK**	(26) 21.06.97	Girona (Spa)
25	Vladyslav **VANAT**	(22) 04.01.02	Dynamo Kyiv

COACH

Serhiy **REBROV**	(50) 03.06.74	

(Ages as of 14.06.24)

2024 COPA AMERICA

ARGENTINA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Franco **ARMANI**	(37) 16.10.86	River Plate
12	Geronimo **RULLI**	(32) 20.05.92	Ajax (Ned)
23	Emiliano **MARTINEZ**	(31) 02.09.92	Aston Villa (Eng)

DEFENDERS

2	Lucas **MARTINEZ QUARTA**	(28) 10.05.96	Fiorentina (Ita)
3	Nicolas **TAGLIAFICO**	(31) 31.08.92	Lyon (Fra)
4	Gonzalo **MONTIEL**	(27) 01.01.97	Nottingham Forest (Eng)
6	German **PEZZELLA**	(32) 27.06.91	Real Betis (Spa)
8	Marcos **ACUNA**	(32) 28.10.91	Sevilla (Spa)
13	Cristian **ROMERO**	(26) 27.04.98	Tottenham Hotspur (Eng)
19	Nicolas **OTAMENDI**	(36) 12.02.88	Benfica (Por)
25	Lisandro **MARTINEZ**	(26) 18.01.98	Manchester United (Eng)
26	Nahuel **MOLINA**	(26) 06.04.98	Atletico Madrid (Spa)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Leandro **PAREDES**	(29) 29.06.94	Roma (Ita)
7	Rodrigo **DE PAUL**	(30) 24.05.94	Atletico Madrid (Spa)
14	Exequiel **PALACIOS**	(25) 05.10.98	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
16	Giovani **LO CELSO**	(28) 09.04.96	Tottenham Hotspur (Eng)
18	Guido **RODRIGUEZ**	(30) 12.04.94	Real Betis (Spa)
20	Alexis **MAC ALLISTER**	(25) 24.12.98	Liverpool (Eng)
21	Valentin **CARBONI**	(19) 05.03.05	Monza (Ita)
24	Enzo **FERNANDEZ**	(23) 17.01.01	Chelsea (Eng)

FORWARDS

9	Julian **ALVAREZ**	(24) 31.01.00	Manchester City (Eng)
10	Lionel **MESSI**	(36) 24.06.87	Inter Miami (USA)
11	Angel **DI MARIA**	(36) 14.02.88	Benfica (Por)
15	Nicolas **GONZALEZ**	(26) 06.04.98	Fiorentina (Ita)
17	Alejandro **GARNACHO**	(19) 01.07.04	Manchester United (Eng)
22	Lautaro **MARTINEZ**	(26) 22.08.97	Internazionale (Ita)

COACH

Lionel **SCALONI**	(46) 16.05.78	

BOLIVIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Carlos **LAMPE**	(37) 17.03.87	Bolivar
12	Gustavo **ALMADA**	(30) 29.04.94	Universitario de Vinto
23	Guillermo **VISCARRA**	(31) 07.02.93	The Strongest

DEFENDERS

2	Jesus **SAGREDO**	(30) 10.03.94	Bolivar
3	Diego **MEDINA**	(22) 13.01.02	Always Ready
4	Luis **HAQUIN**	(26) 15.11.97	Ponte Preta (Bra)
5	Adrian **JUSINO**	(31) 09.07.92	The Strongest
17	Roberto **FERNANDEZ**	(24) 12.07.99	Baltika Kaliningrad (Rus)
21	Jose **SAGREDO**	(30) 10.03.94	Bolivar
24	Marcelo **SUAREZ**	(22) 29.08.01	Always Ready
25	Yomar **ROCHA**	(20) 21.06.03	Bolivar

MIDFIELDERS

6	Leonel **JUSTINIANO**	(31) 02.07.92	Bolivar
7	Miguel **TERCEROS**	(20) 25.04.04	Santos (Bra)
10	Ramiro **VACA**	(24) 01.07.99	Bolivar
14	Robson **TOME**	(22) 18.05.02	Always Ready
15	Gabriel **VILLAMIL**	(22) 28.06.01	LDU (Ecu)
16	Boris **CESPEDES**	(29) 19.06.95	Yverdon-Sport (Sui)
20	Fernando **SAUCEDO**	(34) 15.03.90	Bolivar
22	Hector **CUELLAR**	(23) 16.08.00	Always Ready
26	Adalid **TERRAZAS**	(23) 25.08.00	Always Ready

FORWARDS

8	Jaume **CUELLAR**	(22) 23.08.01	Barcelona B (Spa)
9	Cesar **MENACHO**	(24) 09.08.99	Blooming
11	Carmelo **ALGARANAZ**	(28) 27.01.96	Bolivar
13	Lucas **CHAVEZ**	(21) 17.04.03	Bolivar
18	Rodrigo **RAMALLO**	(33) 14.10.90	The Strongest
19	Bruno **MIRANDA**	(26) 10.02.98	The Strongest

COACH

Antonio Carlos **ZAGO** (Bra)	(55) 18.05.69	

BRAZIL

GOALKEEPERS

1	**ALISSON**	(31) 02.10.92	Liverpool (Eng)
12	**BENTO**	(25) 10.06.99	Athletico Paranaense
23	**RAFAEL**	(34) 23.06.89	Sao Paulo

DEFENDERS

2	**DANILO**	(32) 15.07.91	Juventus (Ita)
3	Eder **MILITAO**	(26) 18.01.98	Real Madrid (Spa)
4	**MARQUINHOS**	(30) 14.05.94	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
6	**WENDELL**	(30) 20.07.93	Porto (Por)
13	Yan **COUTO**	(22) 03.06.02	Girona (Spa)
14	**GABRIEL**	(26) 19.12.97	Arsenal (Eng)
16	**GUILHERME ARANA**	(27) 01.04.97	Atletico Mineiro
17	Lucas **BERALDO**	(20) 24.11.03	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
25	**BREMER**	(27) 18.03.97	Juventus (Ita)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Bruno **GUIMARAES**	(26) 16.11.97	Newcastle United (Eng)
8	Lucas **PAQUETA**	(26) 27.08.97	West Ham United (Eng)
15	**JOAO GOMES**	(23) 12.02.01	Wolves (Eng)
18	**DOUGLAS LUIZ**	(26) 09.05.98	Aston Villa (Eng)
19	Andreas **PEREIRA**	(28) 01.01.96	Fulham (Eng)
24	**EDERSON**	(24) 07.07.99	Atalanta (Ita)

FORWARDS

7	**VINICIUS JUNIOR**	(23) 12.07.00	Real Madrid (Spa)
9	**ENDRICK**	(17) 21.07.06	Palmeiras
10	**RODRYGO**	(23) 09.01.01	Real Madrid (Spa)
11	**RAPHINHA**	(27) 14.12.96	Barcelona (Spa)
20	**SAVIO**	(20) 10.04.04	Girona (Spa)
21	**EVANILSON**	(24) 06.10.99	Porto (Por)
22	Gabriel **MARTINELLI**	(23) 18.06.01	Arsenal (Eng)
26	**PEPE**	(27) 24.02.97	Porto (Por)

COACH

DORIVAL JUNIOR	(62) 25.04.62	

CANADA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Dayne **ST CLAIR**	(27) 09.05.97	Minnesota United (USA)
16	Maxime **CREPEAU**	(30) 11.04.94	Portland Timbers (USA)
18	Tom **McGILL**	(24) 25.03.00	Brighton (Eng)

DEFENDERS

2	Alistair **JOHNSTON**	(25) 08.10.98	Celtic (Sco)
3	Luc **DE FOUGEROLLES**	(18) 12.10.05	Fulham (Eng)
4	Kamal **MILLER**	(27) 16.05.97	Portland Timbers (USA)
5	Joel **WATERMAN**	(28) 24.01.96	CF Montreal
13	Derek **CORNELIUS**	(26) 25.11.97	Malmo (Swe)
15	Moise **BOMBITO**	(24) 30.03.00	Colorado Rapids (USA)
19	Alphonso **DAVIES**	(23) 02.11.00	Bayern Munich (Ger)
20	Ali **AHMED**	(23) 10.10.00	Vancouver Whitecaps
22	Richie **LARYEA**	(29) 07.01.95	Toronto FC
26	Kyle **HIEBERT**	(26) 30.07.97	St Louis City (USA)

MIDFIELDERS

6	Samuel **PIETTE**	(29) 12.11.94	CF Montreal
7	Stephen **EUSTAQUIO**	(27) 21.12.96	Porto (Por)
8	Ismael **KONE**	(22) 16.06.02	Watford (Eng)
21	Jonathan **OSORIO**	(32) 12.06.92	Toronto FC
24	Mathieu **CHOINIERE**	(25) 07.02.99	CF Montreal

FORWARDS

9	Cyle **LARIN**	(29) 17.04.95	Mallorca (Spa)
10	Jonathan **DAVID**	(24) 14.01.00	Lille (Fra)
11	Theo **BAIR**	(24) 27.08.99	Motherwell (Sco)
12	Jacen **RUSSELL-ROWE**	(21) 13.09.02	Columbus Crew (USA)
14	Jacob **SHAFFELBURG**	(24) 26.11.99	Nashville SC (USA)
17	Tajon **BUCHANAN**	(25) 08.02.99	Internazionale (Ita)
23	Liam **MILLAR**	(24) 27.09.99	Preston North End (Eng)
25	Tani **OLUWASEYI**	(24) 15.05.00	Minnesota United (USA)

COACH

Jesse **MARSCH** (USA)	(50) 08.11.73	

CHILE

Experienced...Alexis Sanchez at his fifth Copa America

GOALKEEPERS

1	Claudio **BRAVO**	(41) 13.04.83	Real Betis (Spa)
12	Gabriel **ARIAS**	(36) 13.09.87	Racing (Arg)
23	Brayan **CORTES**	(29) 11.03.95	Colo-Colo

DEFENDERS

2	Gabriel **SUAZO**	(26) 09.08.97	Toulouse (Fra)
3	Guillermo **MARIPAN**	(30) 06.05.94	Monaco (Fra)
4	Mauricio **ISLA**	(36) 12.06.88	Independiente (Arg)
5	Paulo **DIAZ**	(29) 25.08.94	River Plate (Arg)
6	Thomas **GALDAMES**	(25) 20.11.98	Godoy Cruz (Arg)
16	Igor **LICHNOVSKY**	(30) 07.03.94	America (Mex)
21	Matias **CATALAN**	(31) 19.08.92	Talleres (Arg)
25	Benjamin **KUSCEVIC**	(28) 02.05.96	Fortaleza (Bra)
26	Nicolas **FERNANDEZ**	(24) 03.08.99	Audax Italiano

MIDFIELDERS

7	Marcelino **NUNEZ**	(24) 01.03.00	Norwich City (Eng)
13	Erick **PULGAR**	(30) 15.01.94	Flamengo (Bra)
15	Diego **VALDES**	(30) 30.01.94	America (Mex)
17	Esteban **PAVEZ**	(34) 01.05.90	Colo-Colo
18	Rodrigo **ECHEVERRIA**	(29) 17.04.95	Huracan (Arg)
24	Cesar **PEREZ**	(21) 29.11.02	Union La Calera

FORWARDS

8	Dario **OSORIO**	(20) 24.01.04	Midtjylland (Den)
9	Victor **DAVILA**	(26) 04.11.97	CSKA Moscow (Rus)
10	Alexis **SANCHEZ**	(35) 19.12.88	Internazionale (Ita)
11	Eduardo **VARGAS**	(34) 20.11.89	Atletico Mineiro (Bra)
14	Cristian **ZAVALA**	(24) 03.08.99	Colo-Colo
19	Marcos **BOLADOS**	(28) 28.02.96	Colo-Colo
20	Maximiliano **GUERRERO**	(24) 15.01.00	Universidad de Chile
22	Ben **BRERETON DIAZ**	(25) 18.04.99	Sheffield United (Eng)

COACH

Ricardo **GARECA** (Arg)	(66) 10.02.58	

COLOMBIA

GOALKEEPERS

1	David **OSPINA**	(35) 31.08.88	Atletico Nacional
12	Camilo **VARGAS**	(35) 09.03.89	Atlas (Mex)
25	Alvaro **MONTERO**	(29) 29.03.95	Millonarios

DEFENDERS

2	Carlos **CUESTA**	(25) 09.03.99	Genk (Bel)
3	Jhon **LUCUMI**	(25) 26.06.98	Bologna (Ita)
4	Santiago **ARIAS**	(32) 13.01.92	Bahia (Bra)
13	Yerry **MINA**	(29) 24.09.94	Cagliari (Ita)
17	Johan **MOJICA**	(31) 21.08.92	Osasuna (Spa)
21	Daniel **MUNOZ**	(28) 26.05.96	Crystal Palace (Eng)
23	Davinson **SANCHEZ**	(28) 12.06.96	Galatasaray (Tur)
26	Deiver **MACHADO**	(31) 02.09.92	Lens (Fra)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Kevin **CASTANO**	(23) 29.09.00	Krasnodar (Rus)
6	Richard **RIOS**	(24) 02.06.00	Palmeiras (Bra)
8	Jorge **CARRASCAL**	(26) 25.05.98	Dynamo Moscow (Rus)
10	**JAMES** Rodriguez	(32) 12.07.91	Sao Paulo (Bra)
11	Jhon **ARIAS**	(26) 21.09.97	Fluminense (Bra)
15	Mateus **URIBE**	(33) 21.03.91	Al Sadd (Qat)
16	Jefferson **LERMA**	(29) 25.10.94	Crystal Palace (Eng)
20	Juan Fernando **QUINTERO**	(31) 18.01.93	Racing (Arg)
22	Yaser **ASPRILLA**	(20) 19.11.03	Watford (Eng)

FORWARDS

7	Luis **DIAZ**	(27) 13.01.97	Liverpool (Eng)
9	Miguel **BORJA**	(31) 26.01.93	River Plate (Arg)
14	Jhon **DURAN**	(20) 13.12.03	Aston Villa (Eng)
18	Luis **SINISTERRA**	(25) 17.06.99	Bournemouth (Eng)
19	Rafael Santos **BORRE**	(28) 15.09.95	Internacional (Bra)
24	Jhon **CORDOBA**	(31) 11.05.93	Krasnodar (Rus)

COACH

Nestor **LORENZO** (Arg)	(58) 26.02.66	

COSTA RICA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Kevin **CHAMORRO**	(24) 08.04.00	Saprissa
18	Aaron **CRUZ**	(33) 25.05.91	Herediano
23	Patrick **SEQUEIRA**	(25) 01.03.99	Ibiza (Spa)

DEFENDERS

2	Gerald **TAYLOR**	(23) 28.05.01	Saprissa
3	Jeyland **MITCHELL**	(19) 29.09.04	Alajuelense
4	Juan Pablo **VARGAS**	(29) 06.06.95	Millonarios (Col)
5	Fernan **FAERRON**	(23) 22.08.00	Herediano
6	Julio **CASCANTE**	(30) 03.10.93	Austin FC (USA)
8	Joseph **MORA**	(31) 15.01.93	Saprissa
15	Francisco **CALVO**	(31) 08.07.92	Juarez (Mex)
22	Haxzel **QUIROS**	(26) 03.06.98	Herediano
25	Yeison **MOLINA**	(28) 25.01.96	Guanacasteca
26	Douglas **SEQUEIRA**	(20) 16.09.03	Saprissa

MIDFIELDERS

10	Brandon **AGUILERA**	(20) 28.06.03	Bristol Rovers (Eng)
11	Ariel **LASSITER**	(29) 27.09.94	CF Montreal (Can)
13	Jefferson **BRENES**	(27) 13.04.97	Saprissa
14	Orlando **GALO**	(23) 11.08.00	Herediano
16	Alejandro **BRAN**	(23) 05.03.01	Minnesota United (USA)
20	Josimar **ALCOCER**	(19) 07.07.04	Westerlo (Bel)

FORWARDS

7	Anthony **CONTRERAS**	(24) 29.01.00	Pafos (Cyp)
9	Manfred **UGALDE**	(22) 25.05.02	Spartak Moscow (Rus)
12	Joel **CAMPBELL**	(31) 26.06.92	Alajuelense
17	Warren **MADRIGAL**	(19) 24.07.04	Saprissa
19	Kenneth **VARGAS**	(22) 17.04.02	Hearts (Sco)
21	Alvaro **ZAMORA**	(22) 09.03.02	Aris (Gre)
24	Andy **ROJAS**	(18) 05.12.05	Herediano

COACH

Gustavo **ALFARO** (Arg)	(61) 14.08.62	

ECUADOR

GOALKEEPERS

1	Hernan **GALINDEZ**	(37) 30.03.87	Huracan (Arg)
12	Moises **RAMIREZ**	(23) 09.09.00	Independiente del Valle
22	Alexander **DOMINGUEZ**	(37) 05.06.87	LDU

DEFENDERS

2	Felix **TORRES**	(27) 11.01.97	Corinthians (Bra)
3	Piero **HINCAPIE**	(22) 09.01.02	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
4	Joel **ORDONEZ**	(20) 21.04.04	Club Brugge (Bel)
6	Willian **PACHO**	(22) 16.10.01	Eintracht Frankfurt (Ger)
7	Layan **LOOR**	(23) 23.05.01	Universidad Catolica
17	Angelo **PRECIADO**	(26) 18.02.98	Sparta Prague (Cze)
24	Jose **HURTADO**	(22) 23.12.01	Red Bull Bragantino (Bra)
25	Jackson **POROZO**	(23) 04.08.00	Kasimpasa (Tur)
26	Andres **MICOLTA**	(24) 06.07.99	Pachuca (Mex)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Jose **CIFUENTES**	(25) 12.03.99	Cruzeiro (Bra)
8	Carlos **GRUEZO**	(29) 19.04.95	San Jose Earthquakes (USA)
9	John **YEBOAH**	(23) 23.06.00	Rakow Czestochowa (Pol)
10	Kendry **PAEZ**	(17) 04.05.07	Independiente del Valle
14	Alan **MINDA**	(21) 14.05.03	Cercle Brugge (Bel)
15	Angel **MENA**	(36) 21.01.88	Leon (Mex)
16	Jeremy **SARMIENTO**	(22) 16.06.02	Ipswich Town (Eng)
18	Joao **ORTIZ**	(28) 01.05.96	Independiente del Valle
20	Janner **COROZO**	(28) 08.09.95	Barcelona SC
21	Alan **FRANCO**	(25) 21.08.98	Atletico Mineiro (Bra)
23	Moises **CAICEDO**	(22) 02.11.01	Chelsea (Eng)

FORWARDS

11	Kevin **RODRIGUEZ**	(24) 04.03.00	Union Saint-Gilloise (Bel)
13	Enner **VALENCIA**	(34) 04.11.89	Internacional (Bra)
19	Jordy **CAICEDO**	(26) 18.11.97	Atlas (Mex)

COACH

Felix **SANCHEZ** (Spa)	(48) 13.12.75	

JAMAICA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Shaquan **DAVIS**	(23) 11.11.00	Mount Pleasant
13	Coniah **BOYCE-CLARKE**	(21) 01.03.03	Reading (Eng)
23	Jahmali **WAITE**	(25) 24.12.98	El Paso Locomotive (USA)
24	Andre **BLAKE**	(33) 21.11.90	Philadelphia Union (USA)

DEFENDERS

2	Dexter **LEMBIKISA**	(20) 04.11.03	Hearts (Sco)
3	Michael **HECTOR**	(31) 19.07.92	Charlton Athletic (Eng)
4	Richard **KING**	(22) 27.11.01	Cavalier
5	Ethan **PINNOCK**	(31) 29.05.93	Brentford (Eng)
6	Di'Shon **BERNARD**	(23) 14.10.00	Sheffield Wednesday (Eng)
12	Wes **HARDING**	(27) 20.10.96	Millwall (Eng)
15	Joel **LATIBEAUDIERE**	(24) 06.01.00	Coventry City (Eng)
17	Damion **LOWE**	(31) 05.05.93	Philadelphia Union (USA)
21	Jon **BELL**	(26) 26.08.97	Seattle Sounders (USA)
22	Greg **LEIGH**	(29) 30.09.94	Oxford United (Eng)
25	Amari'i **BELL**	(30) 05.05.94	Luton Town (Eng)

MIDFIELDERS

10	Bobby **DECORDOVA-REID**	(31) 02.02.93	Fulham (Eng)
14	Kasey **PALMER**	(27) 09.11.96	Coventry City (Eng)
16	Karoy **ANDERSON**	(19) 01.10.04	Charlton Athletic (Eng)
18	Alex **MARSHALL**	(26) 24.02.98	Portmore United
19	Kevon **LAMBERT**	(27) 22.03.97	Real Salt Lake (USA)

FORWARDS

7	Demarai **GRAY**	(27) 28.06.96	Ettifaq (KSA)
8	Kaheim **DIXON**	(19) 04.10.04	Arnett Gardens
9	Michail **ANTONIO**	(34) 28.03.90	West Ham United (Eng)
11	Shamar **NICHOLSON**	(27) 16.02.97	Clermont (Fra)
20	Renaldo **CEPHAS**	(24) 08.12.99	Ankaragucu (Tur)

COACH

Heimir **HALLGRIMSSON** (Isl) (57) 10.06.67

MEXICO

GOALKEEPERS

1	Julio **GONZALEZ**	(33) 23.04.91	Pumas UNAM
12	Carlos **ACEVEDO**	(28) 19.04.96	Santos Laguna
23	Raul **RANGEL**	(24) 25.02.00	Guadalajara

DEFENDERS

2	Jorge **SANCHEZ**	(26) 10.12.97	Porto (Por)
3	Cesar **MONTES**	(27) 24.02.97	Almeria (Spa)
5	Johan **VASQUEZ**	(25) 22.10.98	Genoa (Ita)
6	Gerardo **ARTEAGA**	(25) 07.09.98	Monterrey
13	Jesus **OROZCO**	(22) 19.02.02	Guadalajara
19	Israel **REYES**	(24) 23.05.00	America
20	Brian **GARCIA**	(26) 31.10.97	Toluca
26	Bryan **GONZALEZ**	(21) 10.04.03	Pachuca

MIDFIELDERS

4	Edson **ALVAREZ**	(26) 24.10.97	West Ham United (Eng)
7	Luis **ROMO**	(29) 05.06.95	Monterrey
8	Carlos **RODRIGUEZ**	(27) 03.01.97	Cruz Azul
14	Erick **SANCHEZ**	(24) 27.09.99	Pachuca
16	Jordi **CORTIZO**	(27) 30.06.96	Monterrey
17	Orbelin **PINEDA**	(28) 24.03.96	AEK Athens (Gre)
24	Luis **CHAVEZ**	(28) 15.01.96	Dynamo Moscow (Rus)
25	Roberto **ALVARADO**	(25) 07.09.98	Guadalajara

FORWARDS

9	Julian **QUINONES**	(27) 24.03.97	America
10	Alexis **VEGA**	(26) 25.11.97	Toluca
11	Santiago **GIMENEZ**	(23) 18.04.01	Feyenoord (Ned)
15	Uriel **ANTUNA**	(26) 21.08.97	Cruz Azul
18	Marcelo **FLORES**	(20) 01.10.03	Tigres UANL
21	Cesar **HUERTA**	(23) 03.12.00	Pumas UNAM
22	Guillermo **MARTINEZ**	(29) 15.03.95	Pumas UNAM

COACH

Jaime **LOZANO** (45) 29.09.78

PANAMA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Luis **MEJIA**	(33) 16.03.91	Nacional (Uru)
12	Cesar **SAMUDIO**	(30) 26.03.94	Marathon (Hon)
22	Orlando **MOSQUERA**	(29) 25.12.94	Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr)

DEFENDERS

2	Cesar **BLACKMAN**	(26) 02.04.98	Slovan Bratislava (Svk)
3	Jose **CORDOBA**	(23) 03.06.01	Norwich City (Eng)
4	Eduardo **ANDERSON**	(23) 31.01.01	Saprissa (Crc)
15	Eric **DAVIS**	(33) 31.03.91	Kosice (Svk)
18	Omar **VALENCIA**	(20) 08.06.04	New York Red Bulls (USA)
19	Ivan **ANDERSON**	(26) 24.11.97	Fortaleza (Col)
23	Michael Amir **MURILLO**	(28) 11.02.96	Marseille (Fra)
24	Edgardo **FARINA**	(22) 21.09.01	Municipal (Gua)
25	Roderick **MILLER**	(32) 03.04.92	Turan Tovuz (Aze)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Abdiel **AYARZA**	(31) 12.09.92	Cienciano (Peru)
6	Cristian **MARTINEZ**	(27) 06.02.97	Al Jandal (KSA)
7	Jose Luis **RODRIGUEZ**	(26) 19.06.98	Famalicao (Por)
8	Adalberto **CARRASQUILLA**	(25) 28.11.98	Houston Dynamo (USA)
10	Yoel **BARCENAS**	(30) 23.10.93	Mazatlan (Mex)
13	Freddy **GONDOLA**	(28) 18.09.95	Maccabi Bnei Reineh (Isr)
14	Jovani **WELCH**	(24) 07.12.99	Academico de Viseu (Por)
16	Carlos **HARVEY**	(24) 03.02.00	Minnesota United (USA)
20	Anibal **GODOY**	(34) 10.02.90	Nashville SC (USA)
21	Cesar **YANIS**	(28) 28.01.96	San Carlos (Crc)
26	Kahiser **LENIS**	(23) 23.07.00	Jaguares (Col)

FORWARDS

9	Eduardo **GUERRERO**	(24) 21.02.00	Zorya Luhansk (Ukr)
11	Ismael **DIAZ**	(27) 12.05.97	Universidad Catolica (Ecu)
17	Jose **FAJARDO**	(30) 18.08.93	Universidad Catolica (Ecu)

COACH

Thomas **CHRISTIANSEN** (Den) (51) 11.03.73

PARAGUAY

GOALKEEPERS

1	Carlos **CORONEL**	(27) 29.12.96	New York Red Bulls (USA)
12	Alfredo **AGUILAR**	(35) 18.07.88	Sportivo Luqueno
22	Rodrigo **MORINIGO**	(25) 07.10.98	Libertad

DEFENDERS

2	Ivan **RAMIREZ**	(29) 08.12.94	Libertad
3	Omar **ALDERETE**	(27) 26.12.96	Getafe (Spa)
4	Matias **ESPINOZA**	(26) 19.09.97	Libertad
5	Fabian **BALBUENA**	(32) 23.08.91	Dynamo Moscow (Rus)
6	Junior **ALONSO**	(31) 09.02.93	Krasnodar (Rus)
13	Nestor **GIMENEZ**	(26) 24.07.97	Libertad
15	Gustavo **GOMEZ**	(31) 06.05.93	Palmeiras (Bra)
25	Gustavo **VELAZQUEZ**	(33) 17.04.91	Newell's Old Boys (Arg)

MIDFIELDERS

8	Damian **BOBADILLA**	(22) 11.07.01	Sao Paulo (Bra)
14	Andres **CUBAS**	(28) 22.05.96	Vancouver Whitecaps (Can)
16	Matias **ROJAS**	(28) 03.11.95	Inter Miami (USA)
17	Alejandro Romero **GAMARRA**	(29) 11.01.95	Al Ain (UAE)
20	Richard **SANCHEZ**	(28) 29.03.96	America (Mex)
21	Fabrizio **PERALTA**	(21) 02.08.02	Cruzeiro (Bra)
23	Mathias **VILLASANTI**	(27) 24.01.97	Gremio (Bra)
26	Hernesto **CABALLERO**	(33) 09.04.91	Libertad

FORWARDS

7	Derlis **GONZALEZ**	(30) 20.03.94	Olimpia
9	Adam **BAREIRO**	(27) 26.07.96	San Lorenzo (Arg)
10	Miguel **ALMIRON**	(30) 10.02.94	Newcastle United (Eng)
11	Angel **ROMERO**	(31) 04.07.92	Corinthians (Bra)
18	Alex **ARCE**	(29) 16.06.95	LDU (Ecu)
19	Julio **ENCISO**	(20) 23.01.04	Brighton (Eng)
24	Ramon **SOSA**	(24) 31.08.99	Talleres (Arg)

COACH

Daniel **GARNERO** (Arg) (55) 01.04.69

PERU

Talented young midfielder...Piero Quispe in action for Peru

GOALKEEPERS

1	Pedro **GALLESE**	(34) 23.02.90	Orlando City (USA)
12	Carlos **CACEDA**	(32) 27.09.91	Melgar
21	Diego **ROMERO**	(22) 17.08.01	Universitario

DEFENDERS

2	Luis **ABRAM**	(28) 27.02.96	Atlanta United (USA)
3	Aldo **CORZO**	(35) 20.05.89	Universitario
4	Anderson **SANTAMARIA**	(32) 10.01.92	Atlas (Mex)
5	Carlos **ZAMBRANO**	(34) 10.07.89	Alianza Lima
6	Marcos **LOPEZ**	(24) 20.11.99	Feyenoord (Ned)
15	Miguel **ARAUJO**	(29) 24.10.94	Portland Timbers (USA)
17	Luis **ADVINCULA**	(34) 02.03.90	Boca Juniors (Arg)
19	Oliver **SONNE**	(23) 10.11.00	Silkeborg (Den)
22	Alexander **CALLENS**	(32) 04.05.92	Girona (Spa)

MIDFIELDERS

8	Sergio **PENA**	(28) 28.09.95	Malmo (Swe)
10	Christian **CUEVA**	(32) 23.11.91	Unattached
13	Jesus **CASTILLO**	(23) 11.06.01	Gil Vicente (Por)
16	Wilder **CARTAGENA**	(29) 23.09.94	Orlando City (USA)
23	Piero **QUISPE**	(22) 14.08.01	Pumas UNAM (Mex)

FORWARDS

7	Andy **POLO**	(29) 29.09.94	Universitario
9	Paolo **GUERRERO**	(40) 01.01.84	Universidad Cesar Vallejo
11	Bryan **REYNA**	(25) 23.08.98	Belgrano (Arg)
14	Gianluca **LAPADULA**	(34) 07.02.90	Cagliari (Ita)
18	Andre **CARRILLO**	(33) 14.06.91	Al Qadsiah (KSA)
20	Edison **FLORES**	(30) 15.05.94	Universitario
24	Jose **RIVERA**	(27) 08.05.97	Universitario
25	Joao **GRIMALDO**	(21) 20.02.03	Sporting Cristal
26	Franco **ZANELATTO**	(24) 09.05.00	Alianza Lima

COACH

Jorge **FOSSATI** (Uru) (71) 22.11.52

UNITED STATES

GOALKEEPERS

1	Matt **TURNER**	(29) 24.06.94	Nottingham Forest (Eng)
18	Ethan **HORVATH**	(29) 09.06.95	Cardiff City (Wal)
25	Sean **JOHNSON**	(35) 31.05.89	Toronto FC (Can)

DEFENDERS

2	Cameron **CARTER-VICKERS**	(26) 31.12.97	Celtic (Sco)
3	Chris **RICHARDS**	(24) 28.03.00	Crystal Palace (Eng)
5	Antonee **ROBINSON**	(26) 08.08.97	Fulham (Eng)
12	Miles **ROBINSON**	(27) 14.03.97	FC Cincinnati
13	Tim **REAM**	(36) 05.10.87	Fulham (Eng)
16	Shaq **MOORE**	(27) 02.11.96	Nashville SC
22	Joe **SCALLY**	(21) 31.12.02	Borussia M'gladbach (Ger)
23	Kristoffer **LUND**	(22) 14.05.02	Palermo (Ita)
24	Mark **McKENZIE**	(25) 25.02.99	Genk (Bel)

MIDFIELDERS

4	Tyler **ADAMS**	(25) 14.02.99	Bournemouth (Eng)
6	Yunus **MUSAH**	(21) 29.11.02	Milan (Ita)
7	Giovanni **REYNA**	(21) 13.11.02	Nottingham Forest (Eng)
8	Weston **McKENNIE**	(25) 28.08.98	Juventus (Ita)
11	Brenden **AARONSON**	(23) 22.10.00	Union Berlin (Ger)
14	Luca **DE LA TORRE**	(26) 23.05.98	Celta Vigo (Spa)
15	Johnny **CARDOSO**	(22) 20.09.01	Real Betis (Spa)
17	Malik **TILLMAN**	(22) 28.05.02	PSV (Ned)

FORWARDS

9	Ricardo **PEPI**	(21) 09.01.03	PSV (Ned)
10	Christian **PULISIC**	(25) 18.09.98	Milan (Ita)
19	Haji **WRIGHT**	(26) 27.03.98	Coventry City (Eng)
20	Folarin **BALOGUN**	(22) 03.07.01	Monaco (Fra)
21	Timothy **WEAH**	(24) 22.02.00	Juventus (Ita)
26	Josh **SARGENT**	(24) 20.02.00	Norwich City (Eng)

COACH

Gregg **BERHALTER** (50) 01.08.73

URUGUAY

GOALKEEPERS

1	Sergio **ROCHET**	(31) 23.03.93	Internacional (Bra)
12	Franco **ISRAEL**	(24) 22.04.00	Sporting (Por)
23	Santiago **MELE**	(26) 06.09.97	Junior (Col)

DEFENDERS

2	Jose Maria **GIMENEZ**	(29) 20.01.95	Atletico Madrid (Spa)
3	Sebastian **CACERES**	(24) 18.08.99	America (Mex)
4	Ronald **ARAUJO**	(25) 07.03.99	Barcelona (Spa)
13	Guillermo **VARELA**	(31) 24.03.93	Flamengo (Bra)
16	Mathias **OLIVERA**	(26) 31.10.97	Napoli (Ita)
17	Matias **VINA**	(26) 09.11.97	Flamengo (Bra)
22	Nicolas **MARICHAL**	(23) 17.03.01	Dynamo Moscow (Rus)
24	Lucas **OLAZA**	(29) 21.07.94	Krasnodar (Rus)

MIDFIELDERS

5	Manuel **UGARTE**	(23) 11.04.01	Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
6	Rodrigo **BENTANCUR**	(26) 25.06.97	Tottenham Hotspur (Eng)
7	Nicolas **DE LA CRUZ**	(27) 01.06.97	Flamengo (Bra)
8	Nahitan **NANDEZ**	(28) 28.12.95	Cagliari (Ita)
10	Giorgian **DE ARRASCAETA**	(30) 01.06.94	Flamengo (Bra)
15	Federico **VALVERDE**	(25) 22.07.98	Real Madrid (Spa)
21	Emiliano **MARTINEZ**	(24) 17.08.99	Midtjylland (Den)

FORWARDS

9	Luis **SUAREZ**	(37) 24.01.87	Inter Miami (USA)
11	Facundo **PELLISTRI**	(22) 20.12.01	Granada (Spa)
14	Agustin **CANOBBIO**	(25) 01.10.98	Athletico Paranaense (Bra)
18	Brian **RODRIGUEZ**	(24) 20.05.00	America (Mex)
19	Darwin **NUNEZ**	(24) 24.06.99	Liverpool (Eng)
20	Maximiliano **ARAUJO**	(24) 15.02.00	Toluca (Mex)
25	Cristian **OLIVERA**	(22) 17.04.02	Los Angeles FC (USA)
26	Brian **OCAMPO**	(24) 25.06.99	Cadiz (Spa)

COACH

Marcelo **BIELSA** (Arg) (68) 21.07.55

VENEZUELA

GOALKEEPERS

1	Joel **GRATEROL**	(27) 13.02.97	America de Cali (Col)
12	Jose **CONTRERAS**	(29) 20.10.94	Aguilas Doradas (Col)
22	Rafael **ROMO**	(34) 25.02.90	Universidad Catolica (Ecu)

DEFENDERS

2	Nahuel **FERRARESI**	(25) 19.11.98	Sao Paulo (Bra)
3	Yordan **OSORIO**	(30) 10.05.94	Parma (Ita)
4	Jon **ARAMBURU**	(21) 23.07.02	Real Sociedad (Spa)
5	Jhon **CHANCELLOR**	(32) 02.01.92	Metropolitanos
14	Christian **MAKOUN**	(24) 05.03.00	Anorthosis Famagusta (Cyp)
15	Miguel **NAVARRO**	(25) 26.02.99	Talleres (Arg)
20	Wilker **ANGEL**	(31) 18.03.93	Criciuma (Bra)
21	Alexander **GONZALEZ**	(31) 13.11.92	Emelec (Ecu)

MIDFIELDERS

6	Yangel **HERRERA**	(26) 07.01.98	Girona (Spa)
7	Jefferson **SAVARINO**	(27) 11.11.96	Botafogo (Bra)
8	Tomas **RINCON**	(36) 13.01.88	Santos (Bra)
10	Yeferson **SOTELDO**	(26) 30.06.97	Gremio (Bra)
11	Darwin **MACHIS**	(31) 07.02.93	Cadiz (Spa)
13	Jose Andres **MARTINEZ**	(29) 07.09.94	Philadelphia Union (USA)
16	Telasco **SEGOVIA**	(21) 02.04.03	Casa Pia (Por)
17	Matias **LACAVA**	(21) 24.10.02	Vizela (Por)
18	Cristian **CASSERES JR**	(24) 20.01.00	Toulouse (Fra)
24	Kervin **ANDRADE**	(19) 13.04.05	Fortaleza (Bra)
25	Eduard **BELLO**	(28) 20.08.95	Mazatlan (Mex)
26	Daniel **PEREIRA**	(23) 14.07.00	Austin FC (USA)

FORWARDS

9	Jhonder **CADIZ**	(28) 29.07.95	Famalicao (Por)
19	Eric **RAMIREZ**	(25) 20.11.98	Atletico Nacional (Col)
23	Salomon **RONDON**	(34) 16.09.89	Pachuca (Mex)

COACH

Fernando **BATISTA** (Arg) (53) 20.08.70

(Ages as of 20.06.24)

Internationals

2024 COPA AMERICA

Group A

Jun 20 – Atlanta
Argentina 2 (Alvarez 49, La. Martinez 88)
Canada 0
Argentina: E. Martinez – Molina (Montiel 89), Romero, Li. Martinez, Acuna (Tagliafico 89); Di Maria (Lo Celso 68), De Paul, Paredes (Otamendi 77), Mac Allister; Messi, Alvarez (La. Martinez 76).
Canada: Crepeau – Johnston, Bombito, Cornelius, Davies; Buchanan (Shaffelburg 59), Kone (Osorio 85), Eustaquio, Millar (Russell-Rowe 85); David, Larin (Laryea 80).

Jun 21 – Arlington
Peru 0
Chile 0
Peru: Gallese – Araujo, Zambrano, Callens (Abram 89); Polo (Sonne 84), Pena, Cartagena, Quispe (Grimaldo 71), Advincula (Lopez 35); Lapadula, Flores (Guerrero 71).
Chile: Bravo – Isla, Lichnovsky, Diaz, Suazo; Nunez (Echeverria 85), Pulgar; Davila (Bolados 65), Sanchez, Valdes (Osorio 46); Vargas (Brereton Diaz 65).

Jun 25 – Kansas City
Peru 0
Canada 1 (David 74)
Peru: Gallese – Araujo, Zambrano (Cueva 79), Callens; Polo, Pena (Carrillo 79), Cartagena, Quispe (Reyna 62), Lopez; Lapadula (Guerrero 70), Flores (Santamaria 62).
Sent off: Araujo 59.
Canada: Crepeau – Johnston, Bombito, Cornelius (Miller 46), Laryea (Buchanan 66); Kone (Osorio 46), Eustaquio; Millar (Shaffelburg 46), David, Davies; Larin (Oluwaseyi 82).

Jun 25 – East Rutherford
Chile 0
Argentina 1 (La. Martinez 88)
Chile: Bravo – Isla (Fernandez 87), Lichnovsky, Diaz, Suazo; Pulgar (Nunez 76), Echeverria; Osorio, Sanchez (Bolados 66), Davila; Vargas (Brereton Diaz 87).
Argentina: E. Martinez – Molina (Acuna 83), Romero, Li. Martinez, Tagliafico (Montiel 83); De Paul, Mac Allister, Fernandez (Lo Celso 64), Gonzalez (Di Maria 73); Messi, Alvarez (La. Martinez 73).

Jun 29 – Miami Gardens
Argentina 2 (La. Martinez 47, 86)
Peru 0
Argentina: E. Martinez – Montiel, Pezzella (Martinez Quarta 83), Otamendi, Tagliafico; Lo Celso (Fernandez 66), Paredes (Rodriguez 77), Palacios; Di Maria (Carboni 77), La. Martinez, Garnacho (Gonzalez 66).
Peru: Gallese – Corzo, Zambrano, Callens; Sonne, Cartagena (Castillo 46), Pena, Lopez (Cueva 77); Flores (Rivera 56), Reyna (Zanelatto 63); Guerrero (Lapadula 56).

Jun 29 – Orlando
Canada 0
Chile 0
Canada: Crepeau – Johnston, Bombito, Cornelius, Davies; Osorio, Eustaquio; Laryea (Buchanan 76), David (Miller 90+5), Shaffelburg (Millar 65); Larin (Oluwaseyi 76).
Chile: Arias – Isla, Lichnovsky, Maripan, Suazo; Nunez (Pulgar 46), Echeverria (Perez 82); Osorio (Galdames 30), Sanchez, Davila (Brereton Diaz 77); Vargas (Bolados 46).
Sent off: Suazo 27.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina (Q)	3	3	0	0	5	0	9
Canada (Q)	3	1	1	1	1	2	4
Chile	3	0	2	1	0	1	2
Peru	3	0	1	2	0	3	1

Group B

Jun 22 – Santa Clara
Ecuador 1 (Sarmiento 40)
Venezuela 2 (Cadiz 64, Bello 74)
Ecuador: Dominguez – Preciado, Torres, Pacho, Hincapie; Franco (J. Caicedo 79), M. Caicedo; Yeboah (Rodriguez 35), Paez (Minda 79), Sarmiento (Gruezo 63); Valencia.
Sent off: Valencia 22.
Venezuela: Romo – Gonzalez, Ferraresi, Osorio, Navarro; Martinez, Herrera (Rincon 90+2); Machis (Cadiz 46), Casseres Jr (Bello 46), Soteldo (Savarino 84); Rondon (Ramirez 84).

Jun 22 – Houston
Mexico 1 (Arteaga 69)
Jamaica 0
Mexico: J. Gonzalez – J. Sanchez, Montes, Vasquez, Arteaga; Alvarez (Romo 30), Chavez (E. Sanchez 78); Antuna (Alvarado 78), Pineda (Rodriguez 68), Quinones; Gimenez (Martinez 68).
Jamaica: Waite – Lembikisa, Bernard (Hector 68), Latibeaudiere, Pinnock, Leigh; Decordova-Reid (Dixon 80), Palmer; Nicholson, Antonio (Cephas 80), Gray (Lowe 68).

Jun 26 – Las Vegas
Ecuador 3 (Palmer 13 og, Paez 45+4 pen, Minda 90+1)
Jamaica 1 (Antonio 54)
Ecuador: Dominguez – Preciado, Torres, Pacho, Hincapie; Franco, M. Caicedo; Yeboah (Minda 64), Paez (Gruezo 88), Sarmiento (Corozo 90+5); Rodriguez (J. Caicedo 88).
Jamaica: Waite – Lembikisa (Cephas 88), Bernard (Hector 46), Latibeaudiere (Anderson 84), Pinnock, Leigh; Lowe (Gray 46), Palmer; Nicholson (Dixon 83), Antonio, Decordova-Reid.

Jun 26 – Inglewood
Venezuela 1 (Rondon 57 pen)
Mexico 0
Venezuela: Romo – Aramburu, Ferraresi, Osorio, Navarro; Martinez, Herrera (Makoun 89); Bello (Machis 71), Savarino (Casseres Jr 46), Soteldo (Angel 82); Rondon (Cadiz 82).
Mexico: J. Gonzalez – J. Sanchez, Montes (Reyes 46), Vasquez, Arteaga; Romo; Antuna (Huerta 73), Rodriguez (Vega 61), Chavez, Quinones (Pineda 78); Gimenez (Martinez 61).

Jun 30 – Glendale
Mexico 0
Ecuador 0
Mexico: J. Gonzalez – J. Sanchez, Montes, Vasquez, Arteaga (Vega 90); Pineda (Martinez 67), Romo (E. Sanchez 85), Chavez; Huerta (Antuna 67), Gimenez, Quinones (Cortizo 86).
Ecuador: Dominguez – Preciado (Hurtado 90+1), Torres, Pacho, Hincapie; Paez (Minda 67), Franco, M. Caicedo, Sarmiento (Mena 76); Rodriguez (Gruezo 76), Valencia.

Jun 30 – Austin
Jamaica 0
Venezuela 3 (Bello 49, Rondon 56, Ramirez 85)
Jamaica: Waite – Latibeaudiere (King 87), Hector, Pinnock; Harding (Anderson 67), Lowe, Palmer, J. Bell; Cephas (Dixon 46), Antonio (Nicholson 67), Gray (Marshall 87).
Venezuela: Romo – Gonzalez, Osorio, Angel, Aramburu (Makoun 81); Martinez, Herrera (Rincon 60); Bello, Segovia (Andrade 74), Machis (Soteldo 60); Rondon (Ramirez 81).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Venezuela (Q)	3	3	0	0	6	1	9
Ecuador (Q)	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Mexico	3	1	1	1	1	1	4
Jamaica	3	0	0	3	1	7	0

Group C

Jun 23 – Arlington
United States 2 (Pulisic 3, Balogun 44)
Bolivia 0
United States: Turner – Scally, Richards, Ream, A. Robinson; McKennie (De la Torre 78), Adams (Musah 46), Reyna (Cardoso 66); Weah (Aaronson 86), Balogun (Pepi 65), Pulisic.
Bolivia: Viscarra – Je. Sagredo, Haquin, Jo. Sagredo; Justiniano (Ramallo 46); Medina (H. Cuellar 46), Saucedo, Villamil, Fernandez (Vaca 75); Menacho (Terceros 46), Miranda (Algaranaz 67).

Jun 23 – Miami Gardens
Uruguay 3 (M. Araujo 16, Nunez 85, Vina 90+1)
Panama 1 (Murillo 90+5)
Uruguay: Rochet – Nandez, R. Araujo (Gimenez 46), M. Olivera (Caceres 60), Vina; Valverde (Bentancur 85), Ugarte; Pellistri, De Arrascaeta (De la Cruz 60), M. Araujo; Nunez.
Panama: Mosquera – Murillo, Farina, Cordoba, Miller, Davis; Rodriguez (Gondola 84), Martinez (Welch 65), Carrasquilla (Ayarza 89), Barcenas (Lenis 89); Fajardo (Guerrero 84).

Jun 27 – Atlanta
Panama 2 (Blackman 26, Fajardo 83)
United States 1 (Balogun 22)
Panama: Mosquera – Murillo, Farina, Cordoba, Miller, Davis; Blackman (Gondola 60), Martinez (Ayarza 76), Carrasquilla, Barcenas; Guerrero (Fajardo 46).
Sent off: Carrasquilla 88.
United States: Turner (Horvath 46) – Scally, Richards, Ream (Sargent 86), A. Robinson; McKennie, Adams (Cardoso 46), Reyna (Carter-Vickers 46); Weah, Balogun (Pepi 72), Pulisic.
Sent off: Weah 18.

Jun 27 – East Rutherford
Uruguay 5 (Pellistri 8, Nunez 21, M. Araujo 77, Valverde 81, Bentancur 89)
Bolivia 0
Uruguay: Rochet – Nandez, R. Araujo, M. Olivera, Vina (Olaza 83); Ugarte, Valverde (Bentancur 86); Pellistri, De la Cruz (De Arrascaeta 89), M. Araujo; Nunez (Suarez 83).
Bolivia: Viscarra – H. Cuellar, Haquin, Jo. Sagredo; Rocha (Medina 74), Cespedes, Villamil, Fernandez (Suarez 46); Terceros (Chavez 68), Algaranaz (Terrazas 82), Vaca (J. Cuellar 74).

Jul 1 – Kansas City
United States 0
Uruguay 1 (M. Olivera 66)
United States: Turner – Scally (Wright 79), Richards, Ream (Tillman 89), A. Robinson; McKennie, Adams, Musah (Sargent 72); Pulisic, Balogun (Pepi 41), Reyna.
Uruguay: Rochet – Nandez, R. Araujo, M. Olivera, Vina (Gimenez 72); Ugarte (Caceres 89), Valverde; Pellistri, De la Cruz (Bentancur 79), M. Araujo (C. Olivera 27); Nunez (Suarez 89).

Jul 1 – Orlando
Bolivia 1 (Miranda 69)
Panama 3 (Fajardo 22, Guerrero 79, Yanis 90+1)
Bolivia: Viscarra – H. Cuellar, Haquin, Suarez; Rocha (Miranda 63), Cespedes (Justiniano 63), Villamil (Terrazas 63), Jo. Sagredo; Terceros (Chavez 81), Vaca (Saucedo 71); Algaranaz.
Panama: Mosquera – Murillo (Lenis 46), Farina, Cordoba, Harvey (Guerrero 74), Davis; Blackman, Martinez (Ayarza 74), Welch (Yanis 90), Barcenas; Fajardo (Gondola 84).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uruguay (Q)	3	3	0	0	9	1	9
Panama (Q)	3	2	0	1	6	5	6
United States	3	1	0	2	3	3	3
Bolivia	3	0	0	3	1	10	0

Group D

Jun 24 – Houston
Colombia 2 (Munoz 32, Lerma 42)
Paraguay 1 (Enciso 69)
Colombia: Vargas – Munoz, Sanchez, Lucumi (Mina 25), Mojica; Rios, Lerma (Uribe 68), J. Arias (Castano 90+2); James (Quintero 90+2), Borre (Cordoba 68), Diaz.
Paraguay: Morinigo – Velazquez, Balbuena, Alderete, Espinoza; Villasanti (A. Romero 80), Cubas, Caballero (Bobadilla 59); Almiron (Sosa 59), Arce (Bareiro 79), Enciso (Rojas 90+2).

Jun 24 – Inglewood
Brazil 0
Costa Rica 0
Brazil: Alisson – Danilo, Militao, Marquinhos, Arana; Guimaraes, Joao Gomes (Martinelli 83); Raphinha (Savio 70), Paqueta, Rodrygo; Vinicius Jr (Endrick 71).
Costa Rica: P. Sequeira – Quiros, Mitchell, J. Vargas, Calvo, Lassiter (Mora 90+2); Galo, Brenes (Bran 64), Aguilera (Taylor 90+2); Zamora (Campbell 70), Ugalde (Madrigal 64).

Jun 28 – Glendale
Colombia 3 (Diaz 31 pen, Sanchez 59, Cordoba 62)
Costa Rica 0
Colombia: Vargas – Munoz, Sanchez, Cuesta, Mojica; Rios (Uribe 46), Lerma (Castano 72), J. Arias; James (Asprilla 72), Cordoba (Duran 77), Diaz (Borre 77).
Costa Rica: P. Sequeira – Quiros, Mitchell, J. Vargas, Calvo, Lassiter (Mora 46); Galo, Aguilera (Brenes 66); Zamora (Alcocer 66), Ugalde (Campbell 46), Madrigal (Rojas 83).

Jun 28 – Las Vegas
Paraguay 1 (Alderete 48)
Brazil 4 (Vinicius Jr 35, 45+5, Savio 43, Paqueta 65 pen)
Paraguay: Morinigo – Velazquez, Balbuena, Alderete, Espinoza (Gimenez 73); Cubas, Villasanti; Bobadilla (Caballero 84), Enciso (K. Romero 73), Almiron (Sosa 78); Arce (Bareiro 73).
Sent off: Cubas 81.
Brazil: Alisson – Danilo, Militao (Gabriel 86), Marquinhos, Wendell; Guimaraes (D. Luiz 72), Joao Gomes; Savio (Raphinha 72), Paqueta (Pereira 79), Vinicius Jr; Rodrygo (Endrick 79).

Jul 2 – Santa Clara
Brazil 1 (Raphinha 12)
Colombia 1 (Munoz 45+2)
Brazil: Alisson – Danilo, Militao, Marquinhos, Wendell (Endrick 86); Guimaraes (D. Luiz 86), Joao Gomes (Ederson 73); Raphinha, Paqueta (Pereira 46), Vinicius Jr; Rodrygo (Savio 73).
Colombia: Vargas – Munoz, Sanchez, Cuesta, Machado (Mojica 46); Rios (Uribe 76), Lerma, J. Arias; James (Carrascal 81), Cordoba (Borre 76), Diaz (Sinisterra 81).

Jul 2 – Austin
Costa Rica 2 (Calvo 3, Alcocer 7)
Paraguay 1 (Sosa 55)
Costa Rica: P. Sequeira – Mitchell, J. Vargas, Calvo; Taylor, Galo, Brenes (Bran 78), Mora (Cascante 88); Madrigal (Contreras 78), Campbell (Aguilera 68), Alcocer (Zamora 68).
Paraguay: Morinigo – Velazquez (Ramirez 74), Balbuena, Alderete, Gimenez; Bobadilla (Gonzalez 83), Villasanti (K. Romero 74); Almiron (Caballero 46), Enciso, Sosa; Bareiro (A. Romero 46).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colombia (Q)	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Brazil (Q)	3	1	2	0	5	2	5
Costa Rica	3	1	1	1	2	4	4
Paraguay	3	0	0	3	3	8	0

Quarter-Finals

Jul 4 – Houston
Argentina 1 (Li. Martinez 35)
Ecuador 1 (Rodriguez 90+1)
Argentina win 4-2 on penalties
Argentina: E. Martinez – Molina (Montiel 90+5), Romero, Li. Martinez (Lo Celso 78), Tagliafico; De Paul, Mac Allister, Fernandez (Otamendi 78), Gonzalez; Messi, La. Martinez (Alvarez 65).
Ecuador: Dominguez – Preciado, Torres, Pacho, Hincapie; Gruezo (Yeboah 79), Franco (J. Caicedo 87); Paez (Minda 76), M. Caicedo, Sarmiento (Rodriguez 76); Valencia (Mena 80).

Jul 5 – Arlington
Venezuela 1 (Rondon 64)
Canada 1 (Shaffelburg 13)
Canada win 4-3 on penalties
Venezuela: Romo – Aramburu, Ferraresi, Osorio (Angel 90+1), Navarro; Bello (Lacava 84), Martinez (Rincon 90+2), Casseres Jr (Cadiz 60), Herrera, Soteldo (Savarino 84); Rondon.
Canada: Crepeau – Johnston, Bombito, Cornelius, Davies; Osorio (Kone 81), Eustaquio; Laryea (Ahmed 72), David, Shaffelburg (Millar 62); Larin (Oluwaseyi 72).

Jul 6 – Glendale
Colombia 5 (Cordoba 8, James 15 pen, Diaz 41, Rios 70, Borja 90+4 pen)
Panama 0
Colombia: Vargas – Munoz (S. Arias 73), Sanchez, Cuesta, Mojica; Rios, Uribe, J. Arias (Carrascal 66); James (Quintero 73), Cordoba (Borja 79), Diaz (Sinisterra 65).
Panama: Mosquera – Murillo, Farina, Cordoba, Miller (Harvey 46), Davis (Valencia 83); Blackman (Guerrero 46), Martinez (Ayarza 62), Welch, Barcenas; Fajardo (Diaz 85).

Jul 6 – Las Vegas
Uruguay 0
Brazil 0
Uruguay win 4-2 on penalties
Uruguay: Rochet – Nandez, R. Araujo (Gimenez 33), M. Olivera, Vina (Caceres 46); Ugarte, Valverde; Pellistri (Varela 78), De la Cruz (Bentancur 67), M. Araujo; Nunez (De Arrascaeta 78).
Sent off: Nandez 74.
Brazil: Alisson – Danilo, Militao, Marquinhos, Arana; Guimaraes (Evanilson 87), J. Gomes (Pereira 81); Raphinha (Savio 82), Paqueta (D. Luiz 81), Rodrygo (Martinelli 87); Endrick.

Semi-Finals

Jul 9 – East Rutherford
Argentina 2 (Alvarez 22, Messi 51)
Canada 0
Argentina: E. Martinez – Montiel (Molina 71), Romero, Li. Martinez, Tagliafico (Otamendi 64); Di Maria (Gonzalez 78), De Paul, Fernandez, Mac Allister (Palacios 78); Messi, Alvarez (La. Martinez 78).
Canada: Crepeau – Johnston, Bombito, Cornelius, Davies (Osorio 71); Laryea (Ahmed 55), Kone, Eustaquio (Choiniere 72), Shaffelburg (Millar 55); David (Oluwaseyi 64), Larin.

Jul 10 – Charlotte
Uruguay 0
Colombia 1 (Lerma 39)
Uruguay: Rochet – Caceres, Gimenez, M. Olivera (De Arrascaeta 46); Valverde, Ugarte; Pellistri (C. Olivera 46), Bentancur (Varela 34, Suarez 67), De la Cruz (Canobbio 90), M. Araujo; Nunez.
Colombia: Vargas – Munoz, Sanchez, Cuesta, Mojica; Rios (Uribe 61), Lerma; J. Arias (S. Arias 46), James (Castano 62), Diaz (Sinisterra 86); Cordoba (Mina 75).
Sent off: Munoz 45+1.

Third Place Play-Off

Jul 13 – Charlotte
Canada 2 (Kone 22, David 80)
Uruguay 2 (Bentancur 8, Suarez 90+2)
Uruguay win 4-3 on penalties
Canada: St Clair – Johnston (Davies 62), De Fougerolles (Cornelius 67), Bombito, Laryea; Kone, Choiniere; Ahmed (Millar 77), Osorio (Bair 77), Shaffelburg; Oluwaseyi (David 67).
Uruguay: Rochet – Nandez, Gimenez, Caceres, Vina (Olaza 66); Valverde, Ugarte (De Arrascaeta 46), Bentancur; Pellistri (Rodriguez 61), Nunez (Suarez 46), M. Araujo (C. Olivera 61).

Final

Jul 14 – Miami Gardens
Argentina 1 (La. Martinez 112)
Colombia 0
After Extra-Time
Argentina: E. Martinez – Montiel (Molina 72), Romero, Li. Martinez, Tagliafico; Di Maria (Otamendi 117), De Paul, Fernandez (Lo Celso 97), Mac Allister (Paredes 97); Messi (Gonzalez 66), Alvarez (La. Martinez 97).
Colombia: Vargas – S. Arias, Sanchez, Cuesta, Mojica; Rios (Castano 89), Lerma (Uribe 106), J. Arias (Carrascal 106); James (Quintero 90), Cordoba (Borre 89), Diaz (Borja 106).

2024 OFC NATIONS CUP

Group A

Jun 15 – Port Vila
Solomon Islands 0
Vanuatu 1 (Tangis 72)

Jun 18 – Port Vila
New Zealand 3 (Waine 6, 11, Barbarouses 45+4)
Solomon Islands 0

Jun 21 – Port Vila
Vanuatu 0
New Zealand 4 (Mata 80, Kaltak 27 og, Just 63, Old 78)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
New Zealand (Q)	2	2	0	0	7	0	6
Vanuatu (Q)	2	1	0	1	1	4	3
Solomon Islands	2	0	0	2	0	4	0
New Caledonia*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Withdrew

Group B

Jun 16 – Suva
Tahiti 2 (Degrumelle 4, T. Tehau 28)
Samoa 0

Jun 16 – Suva
Papua New Guinea 1 (Semmy 88)
Fiji 5 (Begg 2, Dunn 43, 52, A. Komolong 55 og, Krishna 64)

Jun 19 – Suva
Papua New Guinea 1 (Paul 25)
Tahiti 1 (Degrumelle 15)

Jun 19 – Suva
Samoa 1 (Salisbury 47)
Fiji 9 (Hughes 3, 61, Dunn 38, Krishna 45+3 pen, 53 pen, Baravilala 64, Begg 67, Dogalau 83, 89)

Jun 22 – Suva
Samoa 1 (Trainor 67)
Papua New Guinea 2 (Semmy 26, Kepo 47)

Jun 22 – Suva
Fiji 1 (Krishna 26 pen)
Tahiti 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fiji (Q)	3	3	0	0	15	2	9
Tahiti (Q)	3	1	1	1	3	2	4
PNG	3	1	1	1	4	7	4
Samoa	3	0	0	3	2	13	0

Semi-Finals

Jun 27 – Port Vila
New Zealand 5 (Surman 7, Waine 45, 53, Barbarouses 45+3, 72)
Tahiti 0

Jun 27 – Port Vila
Fiji 1 (Cavuilagi 46)
Vanuatu 2 (Spokeyjack 11, Thomas 57)

Third Place Play-Off

Jun 30 – Port Vila
Tahiti 2 (T. Tehau 72, 83)
Fiji 1 (Krishna 58)

Final

Jun 30 – Port Vila
New Zealand 3 (Howieson 2, Randall 83, Mata 90+1)
Vanuatu 0
New Zealand: Crocombe – Sutton (Smith 73), Surman, Bindon (Kelly-Heald 89), Cacace; Rufer, Howieson; Barbarouses, Just (Grieve 82), Old (Mata 89); Waine (Randall 73).
Vanuatu: Iamar – Boulet, Thomas, Kaltak, Jeffrey (Iawak 65); Spokeyjack, Alick (Worworbu 90+1), Clark (Aru 81), Tenene; Wohale (Moses 81), Saniel (Tangis 65).
Sent off: Boulet 75.

2024 COSAFA CUP

Group A

Jun 26: Eswatini 0-0 Botswana; South Africa 1-1 Mozambique
Jun 29: Mozambique 0-0 Eswatini; Botswana 0-0 South Africa
Jul 2: Mozambique 3-1 Botswana; South Africa 1-0 Eswatini

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mozambique (Q)	3	1	2	0	4	2	5
South Africa	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
Eswatini	3	0	2	1	0	1	2
Botswana	3	0	2	1	1	3	2

Group B

Jun 27: Zimbabwe 1-0 Comoros; Zambia 0-2 Kenya
Jun 30: Kenya 0-2 Comoros; Zambia 0-2 Zimbabwe
Jul 2: Kenya 2-0 Zimbabwe; Comoros 1-0 Zambia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Comoros (Q)	3	2	0	1	3	1	6
Kenya	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Zimbabwe	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
Zambia	3	0	0	3	0	5	0

Group C

Jun 28: Lesotho 1-1 Seychelles; Angola 0-0 Namibia
Jul 1: Angola 3-2 Seychelles; Namibia 2-1 Lesotho
Jul 3: Namibia 3-1 Seychelles; Lesotho 1-3 Angola

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Angola (Q)	3	2	1	0	6	3	7
Namibia (Q)	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
Seychelles	3	0	1	2	4	7	1
Lesotho	3	0	1	2	3	6	1

Semi-Finals

Jul 5: Comoros 1-2 Angola; Mozambique 0-0 Namibia
(*Namibia win 4-2 on penalties*)

Third Place Play-Off

Jul 7: Comoros 2-2 Mozambique
(*Mozambique win 3-1 on penalties*)

Final

Jul 7: Angola 5-0 Namibia

Club Football

CONCACAF

ANGUILLA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Doc's United (C)	16	15	1	0	58	6	46
Roaring Lions	16	10	2	4	51	21	32
Attackers	16	10	2	4	46	21	32
Diamond	16	7	5	4	27	21	26
Uprising	15	6	3	7	35	47	21
Lymers	15	3	6	7	25	34	15
Spartans	16	3	5	8	10	30	14
Eagle Claw	15	2	2	12	22	56	8
West End Predators	16	2	2	12	18	56	8

BAHAMAS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Western Warriors (C)	20	18	2	0	89	19	56
University Bahamas	20	14	3	3	81	25	45
Renegades	20	15	0	5	66	27	45
IM Bears	20	13	5	2	102	26	44
Inter Nassau	20	8	3	9	63	69	27
Dynamos	20	7	2	11	49	55	23
United	20	6	3	11	32	43	21
Cavalier	20	7	0	13	32	102	21
Future Stars	20	5	2	13	39	73	17
Inter Nassau 17	20	3	1	16	22	85	10
Baha Juniors	20	2	3	15	30	81	9

BARBADOS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Weymouth Wales (C)	18	15	2	1	46	13	47
UWI Blackbirds	18	13	3	2	38	20	42
Kick Start	18	10	3	5	29	19	33
Paradise	18	8	5	5	37	26	29
Wotton	18	7	4	7	31	27	25
Brittons Hill	18	7	2	9	35	24	23
Ellerton	18	5	5	8	28	31	20
Deacons	18	5	5	8	28	34	20
Empire Club (R)	18	3	3	12	28	48	12
Barbados Academy (R)	18	1	0	17	12	70	3

BONAIRE

Regular Season

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletiko Flamingo*	10	8	2	0	63	10	26
Real Rincon*	10	8	2	0	51	7	26
Vitesse*	10	8	1	1	40	8	25
Vespo*	10	7	0	3	33	11	21
Estrellas*	10	6	0	4	24	27	18
Independiente*	10	5	0	5	14	23	15
Atletiko Tera Cora	10	3	1	6	23	29	10
Young Boys	10	3	0	7	17	52	9
Uruguay	10	2	2	6	18	20	8
Juventus	10	1	0	9	6	53	3
Arriba Peru	10	0	0	10	9	58	0

*Advance to next stage

Kaya 6 Play-Offs

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Rincon*	5	4	0	1	14	6	12
Atletiko Flamingo*	5	3	1	1	13	5	10
Vespo*	5	2	3	0	9	5	9
Independiente*	5	2	1	2	8	7	7
Vitesse	5	1	1	3	5	9	4
Estrellas	5	0	0	5	3	20	0

*Advance to next stage

Kaya 4 Play-Offs

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Vespo*	3	2	1	0	9	4	7
Real Rincon* (C)	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Atletiko Flamingo	3	1	0	2	8	7	1
Independiente	3	0	0	3	3	13	0

*Advance to final

Final

Jun 28: Vespo 1-2 Real Rincon

FRENCH GUIANA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Etoile Matoury (C)	26	22	4	0	89	20	96
Le Geldar	26	16	4	6	62	29	78
Matoury	26	14	6	6	35	20	74
Grand Santi*	26	15	3	8	56	27	73
SC Kourou*	26	13	6	7	47	31	70
Remire	26	14	1	11	51	48	69
Saint-Georges*	26	11	5	10	56	46	63
Montsinery*	26	11	4	11	41	47	62
CSC Cayenne	26	8	4	14	29	46	54
Loyola	26	7	6	13	32	46	53
Karib**	26	8	4	14	31	54	52
Olympique Cayenne***	26	7	3	16	31	52	49
Sport Guyanais (R)	26	5	4	17	25	72	45
Balata-Abriba (R)	26	1	6	19	23	70	35

Win = 4 points, Draw = 2 points, Loss = 1 point
**Deducted 1 point*
***Deducted 2 points*
****Deducted 1 point and enter promotion-relegation play-off*

ASIA

LEBANON

Regular Season

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Nejmeh	11	9	1	1	25	11	28
Al Ahed	11	9	1	1	31	6	28
Bourj	11	6	3	2	17	11	21
Al Ansar	11	5	5	1	20	13	20
Safa	11	4	5	2	22	17	17
Racing	11	3	6	2	19	19	15
Shabab Al Sahel	11	3	5	3	11	15	14
Tripoli SC	11	3	3	5	11	13	12
Al Hikma	11	2	1	8	9	18	7
Al Ahli Nabatiya	11	0	6	5	5	15	6
Tadamon Sour	11	1	2	8	5	16	5
Shabab Al Ghazieh	11	1	2	8	5	26	5

• Top six advance to championship round, bottom six enter relegation round with points obtained during regular season halved and rounded up

Championship Round

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Nejmeh (C)	26	19	3	4	44	20	46
Al Ansar	26	16	7	3	55	24	45
Al Ahed	26	15	5	6	54	22	36
Safa	26	8	10	8	35	38	26
Bourj	26	9	8	9	26	32	25
Racing	26	3	10	13	29	50	12

Relegation Round

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shabab Al Sahel	26	10	9	7	30	23	32
Tadamon Sour	26	7	7	12	16	28	26
Al Hikma	26	7	6	13	21	30	24
Shabab Al Ghazieh	26	6	7	13	22	41	23
Al Ahli Nabatiya (R)	26	5	10	11	16	32	22
Tripoli SC (R)	26	7	6	13	21	29	21

MONGOLIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Falcons (C)	27	21	2	4	88	19	65
Khangarid	27	18	5	4	71	36	59
Deren	27	15	6	6	80	32	51
Ulaanbaatar	27	15	1	11	70	40	46
Tuv Azarganuud	27	14	3	10	72	47	45
Khoromkhon	27	14	1	12	69	66	43
Khaan Khuns/Erchim	27	11	7	9	72	70	40
Brera Ilch	27	8	0	19	51	85	24
Khovd*	27	3	2	22	32	89	11
Bavarians (R)	27	2	1	24	33	154	7

*Enter promotion-relegation play-off

VIETNAM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nam Dinh (C)	26	16	5	5	60	38	53
Binh Dinh	26	13	8	5	47	28	47
Hanoi	26	13	4	9	45	37	43
Ho Chi Minh City	26	11	7	8	30	26	40
Viettel	26	10	8	8	29	28	38
Cong An Hanoi	26	11	4	11	44	35	37
Haiphong	26	9	8	9	42	39	35
Binh Duong	26	10	5	11	33	34	35
Thanh Hoa	26	9	8	9	34	39	35
Quang Nam	26	8	8	10	34	36	32
Hoang Anh Gia Lai	26	8	8	10	22	35	32
Song Lam Nghe An	26	7	9	10	27	32	30
Hong Linh Ha Tinh*	26	7	9	10	25	32	30
Sanna Khanh Hoa (R)	26	2	5	19	19	52	11

*Enter promotion-relegation play-off

World Service

AFRICA

BENIN

Championship Round

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Coton Sport Ouidah (C)	24	15	6	3	26	10	51
Dadje	24	14	5	5	30	19	47
Loto Popo	24	11	9	4	26	14	42
Bani Ganse	24	11	6	7	28	23	39
Dragons	24	10	6	8	20	20	36
Dynamo Abomey	24	8	9	7	28	26	33
Damissa	24	9	5	10	29	25	32
ASPAC	24	7	10	7	16	19	31
Cavaliers	24	7	9	8	27	26	30
Espoir Savalou	24	8	6	10	21	23	30
Sobemap	24	6	10	8	23	27	28
Takunnin	24	7	5	12	20	28	26
AS Cotonou	24	6	7	11	22	27	25
Ayema	24	6	6	12	16	22	24
JSP	24	6	6	12	18	30	24
Requins	24	3	11	10	19	30	20

North Relegation Round

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Buffles	10	6	4	0	14	7	22
Beke Bembereke	10	5	3	2	15	7	18
Tonnerre	10	5	0	5	11	12	15
Hodio	10	4	3	3	12	9	15
Pantheres	10	4	2	4	10	9	14
Dynamo Parakou	10	4	2	4	12	15	14
Abeilles	10	3	3	4	12	15	12
Real Sport	10	2	5	3	9	10	11
Dynamique Djougou	10	2	2	6	8	17	8
Soleil (R)	10	2	2	6	11	13	8

South Relegation Round

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
JAK	10	6	3	1	21	9	21
ASVO	10	5	3	2	10	5	18
JSO	10	4	3	3	8	7	15
Adjidja	10	3	5	2	10	7	14
Ainonvi	10	4	1	5	7	10	13
Etoile Filante	10	3	3	4	8	9	12
Police	10	2	5	3	6	10	11
Aziza	10	3	2	5	10	17	11
Avrankou Omnisport	10	2	4	4	9	12	10
Djeffa (R)	10	2	3	5	5	8	9

CONGO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leopards de Dolisie (C)	26	15	7	4	33	14	52
Otoho d'Oyo	26	14	7	5	36	16	49
Inter Club	26	14	7	5	31	17	49
JS Talangai	26	12	5	9	24	25	41
Etoile du Congo	26	10	9	7	23	17	39
Diables Noirs	26	9	10	7	33	24	37
CARA Brazzaville	26	9	9	8	21	18	36
Cheminots	26	8	9	9	22	23	33
Vita Club Mokanda	26	10	3	13	24	26	33
Kondzo	26	8	7	11	24	26	31
Jeunesse Unie de Kintele	26	6	10	10	27	37	28
Nouvelle Generation	26	7	6	13	26	37	27
Vegas*	26	5	7	14	18	37	22
Nathaly's (R)	26	3	8	15	10	35	17

*Enter promotion-relegation play-off

ETHIOPIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ethiopia Nigd Bank (C)	30	19	7	4	57	27	64
Mekelakeya	30	19	6	5	47	27	63
Ethiopia Bunna	30	14	9	7	51	32	51
Bahardar	30	13	11	6	36	26	50
Kedus Giorgis	30	13	9	8	43	26	48
Fasil Kenema	30	11	11	8	35	30	44
Adama Kenema	30	11	11	8	40	37	44
Hadiya Hosaena	30	9	14	7	30	25	41
Awassa Kenema	30	11	8	11	42	46	41
Ethiopian Medhin	30	10	10	10	37	34	40
Sidama Bunna	30	11	7	12	30	31	40
Dire Dawa Kenema	30	11	7	12	32	38	40
Dicha SC	30	8	10	12	25	35	34
Wolkite Ketema (R)	30	5	8	17	15	41	23
Shashemene Kenema (R)	30	3	8	19	22	42	17
Hambericho Durame (R)	30	1	6	23	12	57	9

GAMBIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real de Banjul (C)	30	21	5	4	55	20	68
Falcons	30	15	7	8	35	24	52
Steve Biko	30	14	9	7	30	20	51
Fortune	30	11	13	6	36	28	46
Team Rhino	30	11	9	10	26	28	42
Armed Forces	30	9	12	9	34	34	39
Greater Tomorrow	30	10	9	11	27	28	39
Brikama United	30	10	8	12	27	31	38
TMT	30	8	14	8	25	28	38
BST Galaxy	30	9	10	11	26	30	37
Marimoo	30	8	12	10	22	25	36
Banjul	30	8	11	11	25	28	35
Bombada	30	9	8	13	34	37	35
Wallidan*	30	9	8	13	22	27	35
Waa Banjul (R)	30	7	10	13	18	32	31
Samger (R)	30	5	7	18	20	42	22

*Enter promotion-relegation play-off

KENYA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gor Mahia (C)	34	21	10	3	48	20	73
Tusker	34	20	5	9	47	26	65
Police	34	15	12	7	42	28	57
Bandari	34	14	10	10	31	26	52
Leopards	34	13	12	9	32	23	51
Nairobi City Stars	34	13	11	10	42	39	50
Kariobangi Sharks	34	12	12	10	44	34	48
Homeboyz	34	12	12	10	33	28	48
Posta Rangers	34	13	9	12	30	31	48
KCB	34	10	15	9	31	32	45
Bidco United	34	11	11	12	36	38	44
Ulinzi Stars	34	10	9	15	24	28	39
Murang'a SEAL	34	9	11	14	28	34	38
Shabana	34	10	8	16	38	45	38
Talanta	34	8	13	13	35	48	37
Sofapaka*	34	9	9	16	39	53	36
Muhoroni Youth (R)	34	6	14	14	24	35	32
Nzoia Sugar (R)	34	5	7	22	24	60	22

*Enter promotion-relegation play-off

MADAGASCAR

North Group

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fosa Juniors*	7	6	0	1	22	9	18
ASA Diana*	7	5	2	0	14	4	17
Fanalamanga*	7	4	1	2	17	4	13
Tsaramandroso*	7	4	1	2	15	18	13
USCA Foot	7	3	1	3	8	7	10
COSFA	7	1	1	5	7	16	4
KFCA	7	1	1	5	6	17	4
Ajesaia (R)	7	0	1	6	10	24	1

*Advance to quarter-finals

South Group

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CS-Disciples* (C)	7	5	0	2	12	5	15
Elgeco Plus*	7	3	4	0	7	3	13
Zanak'Ala*	7	3	1	3	4	6	10
3FB Toliara*	7	3	1	3	4	6	10
CFFA	7	2	3	2	5	5	9
Mama FCA	7	2	3	2	5	6	9
Dato FC	7	2	0	5	8	11	6
Inate Rouge (R)	7	1	2	4	3	6	5

*Advance to quarter-finals

Quarter-Finals

May 17-21: Tsaramandroso 1-3 CS-Disciples; Fosa Juniors 0-2 Elgeco Plus; Zanak'Ala 3-1 Fanalamanga; 3FB Toliara 3-2 ASA Diana
May 24-25: CS-Disciples 2-1 Tsaramandroso (agg 5-2); Elgeco Plus 1-1 Fosa Juniors (agg 3-1); Fanalamanga 1-3 Zanak'Ala (Agg 2-6); ASA Diana 2-3 3FB Toliara (agg 4-6)

Semi-Finals

Jun 12-15: Elgeco Plus 1-0 3FB Toliara; Zanak'Ala 3-2 CS-Disciples
Jun 22: 3FB Toliara 1-2 Elgeco Plus (agg 1-3); CS-Disciples 3-0 Zanak'Ala (agg 5-3)

Final

Jun 29: CS-Disciples 1-0 Elgeco Plus

NIGERIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enugu Rangers (C)	38	21	7	10	56	33	70
Remo Stars	38	20	5	13	53	39	65
Enyimba	38	19	6	13	46	33	63
Shooting Stars	38	18	8	12	48	34	62
Plateau United	38	18	4	16	53	40	58
Lobi Stars	38	17	7	14	48	45	58
Katsina United	38	15	10	13	42	39	55
Rivers United	38	15	8	15	51	42	53
Bendel Insurance	38	14	11	13	32	30	53
Sunshine Stars	38	13	13	12	37	37	52
Kano Pillars	38	15	7	16	49	50	52
Abia Warriors	38	15	7	16	42	45	52
Kwara United	38	12	15	11	38	37	51
Niger Tornadoes	38	14	9	15	38	41	51
Bayelsa United	38	13	11	14	46	50	50
Akwa United	38	14	7	17	44	42	49
Sporting Lagos	38	12	10	16	39	44	46
Doma United (R)	38	11	11	16	26	42	44
Heartland (R)	38	9	11	18	36	50	38
Gombe United* (R)	38	8	7	23	21	78	25

*Deducted 6 points

TOGO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ASKO de Kara (C)	30	21	6	3	38	12	69
Kara	30	17	8	5	35	11	59
OTR	30	13	11	6	40	23	50
Gomido	30	14	7	9	30	24	49
Gbohloe-su des Lacs	30	12	12	6	32	22	48
Entente II	30	10	13	7	33	26	43
Barracuda	30	11	9	10	29	27	42
Tambo	30	9	14	7	27	21	41
Unisport	30	10	8	12	34	34	38
Espoir	30	8	13	9	21	22	37
Doumbe de Mango	30	9	9	12	32	42	36
Binah	30	8	11	11	21	24	35
Semassi (R)	30	8	8	14	22	33	32
Kakadl (R)	30	8	7	15	21	39	31
Gbikinti Bassar (R)	30	4	8	18	17	40	20
Dynamic Togolais (R)	30	3	6	21	15	47	15

TUNISIA

Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Etoile du Sahel	12	7	4	1	15	5	25
Stade Tunisien	12	7	3	2	18	10	24
Club Africain	12	7	3	2	14	7	24
Ben Guerdane	12	4	3	5	13	11	15
Olympique Beja	12	4	2	6	8	14	14
EGS Gafsa	12	3	3	6	9	18	12
Soliman	12	1	0	11	7	19	3

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Esperance	12	10	2	0	20	5	32
US Monastir	12	8	2	2	22	9	26
CS Sfaxien	12	6	2	4	12	4	20
Bizertin	12	4	4	4	12	13	16
Metlaoui	12	2	3	7	10	20	9
Tataouine	12	2	3	7	6	17	9
Marsa	12	1	2	9	4	18	5

• *First place carries over three points, second carries over two points and third carries over one point to championship round. Fourth place carries over four points, fifth carries over three points, sixth carries over two points and last carries over no points to relegation round*

Championship Round

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Esperance (C)	10	6	3	1	13	7	24
US Monastir	10	3	5	2	8	5	16
CS Sfaxien	10	2	6	2	6	5	13
Stade Tunisien	10	1	8	1	5	5	13
Etoile du Sahel	10	0	7	3	4	7	10
Club Africain	10	1	5	4	4	11	9

Relegation Round

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olympique Beja	14	8	3	3	21	9	30
Bizertin	14	6	5	3	17	10	27
EGS Gafsa	14	5	4	5	11	11	21
Tataouine	14	5	4	5	11	16	21
Metlaoui	14	4	5	5	15	17	20
Ben Guerdane	14	4	3	7	12	15	19
Soliman*	14	6	1	7	13	15	19
Marsa* (R)	14	5	1	8	13	20	16

*Enter relegation decider

Relegation Decider

Jun 19: Soliman 1-0 Marsa

ZANZIBAR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
JKU (C)	30	20	6	4	45	23	66
Zimamoto	30	19	5	6	51	23	62
KMKM	30	18	3	9	46	20	57
KVZ	30	17	5	8	50	27	56
Mafunzo	30	12	12	6	35	29	48
Uhamiaji	30	12	11	7	28	19	47
Kipanga	30	11	7	12	40	35	40
Chipukizi	30	11	7	12	24	23	40
Mlandege	30	8	13	9	22	25	37
New City	30	9	10	11	30	38	37
Malindi	30	10	6	14	28	30	36
Hard Rock	30	8	12	10	23	28	36
Kundemba (R)	30	10	5	15	37	40	35
Ngome (R)	30	6	9	15	31	51	27
Jamhuri (R)	30	4	8	18	17	50	20
Maendeleo Manta (R)	30	4	3	23	27	73	15

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Darijo Srna

Shakhtar 2 Werder Bremen 1

2008-09 UEFA Cup final, Istanbul

The former Shakhtar Donetsk and Croatia captain looks back on the Ukrainian club's finest hour

UEFA Cup-winning captain...Shakhtar hero Darijo Srna

"We knew Werder Bremen had a very good team, with players like Claudio Pizarro, who had scored a lot of goals that season, and Torsten Frings, who was an established Germany international in midfield. They also had a young Mesut Ozil in the side, as well as the Brazilian playmaker Diego – although he missed the final after getting booked in their semi-final.

But we had a very good team too. We had players like Fernandinho and Willian, who both went on to do well in the English Premier League – and on that night in Istanbul we had full belief we could win the final.

Our coach was Mircea Lucescu, who was a very experienced person having had a long-playing career in Romanian club football and with the national side in the 1960s and '70s.

I remember before the game he took me to one side and said: "Darijo, today is the time to enjoy it, because you know everybody remembers only the winner of such games."

Of course, that is true, but also very easy to say, because any mistake in such a big occasion can decide a final. Not that I was nervous before that game or any other. I don't think any professional footballer ever is, not once they are out on the pitch. Yes, it had been a long season, but I was someone who worked hard with my fitness and I felt fit and strong and ready to focus.

Luiz Adriano had given us the lead in the first half with a nice finish, but Werder Bremen equalised before half-time with a free-kick by Naldo. We won the game with a goal in extra-time, and it was with the kind of move we used successfully at Shakhtar many times.

When I would receive the ball on the right wing, Jadson, one of our attackers, would be around about 11 metres away from goal. In this situation, I wasn't looking to cross it into the box for someone to attack the ball at head height, as we didn't have a lot of tall players. Instead, we would look to keep the ball, but do so with a purpose, so when I passed across the penalty area from the right wing, Jadson was ready to strike the ball first time. That goal won us the game.

It was the first major European trophy for a Ukrainian team since the break-up of the Soviet Union, but as a club we weren't satisfied with having won it once, we wanted to do it again and had the belief to do it.

The strange thing is, I don't think the Shakhtar Donetsk team I played in on that great night in 2009 was the best Shakhtar team I played in – in the years to come, we were even stronger and had the belief that we could repeat the feat – but that is life.

> "I don't think the Shakhtar Donetsk team I played in on that great night in 2009 was actually the best Shakhtar team I played in"

Goalscorer...Srna with his team-mate Luiz Adriano

The final in 2009 was a great and proud moment. To win that match and lift that trophy high for the fans of Donetsk, which, having been here 20 years, is like a second home to me."

Interview by Mark Sanderson

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